



White Paper on Dismissed Chinese Students in the United States

WholeRen Education, LLC Research Center

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Abstract: Most Chinese students believe that an admission letter equals a bright future. However, according to WholeRen Consulting Database, there are 515 Chinese students expelled by American schools due to a series of reasons. The primary expelling reasons are as follow: low GPA (62.1%), academic dishonesty (21.4%), low attendance (10.9%), misbehavior (2.9%), breaking the law (1.9%), and psychological issues (0.7%). This White Paper intends to analyze the dismissed students' characteristics and reasons of dismissal, thus, we try to reveal their main characteristics and provide suggestions to prevent students from dismissal.

1 Introduction

1.1 Current Situation of Chinese Students in United States

The rapid economic development in China has incentivized an increasing number of Chinese students to study abroad, including the United States, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, and other European countries. According to the China Ministry of Education, a total of 413,900 students were studying abroad in 2013, which was an increase of 3.58% compared to the data published in 2012. **Fig. 1.1** shows the population of Chinese students studying abroad from 2006 to 2013.

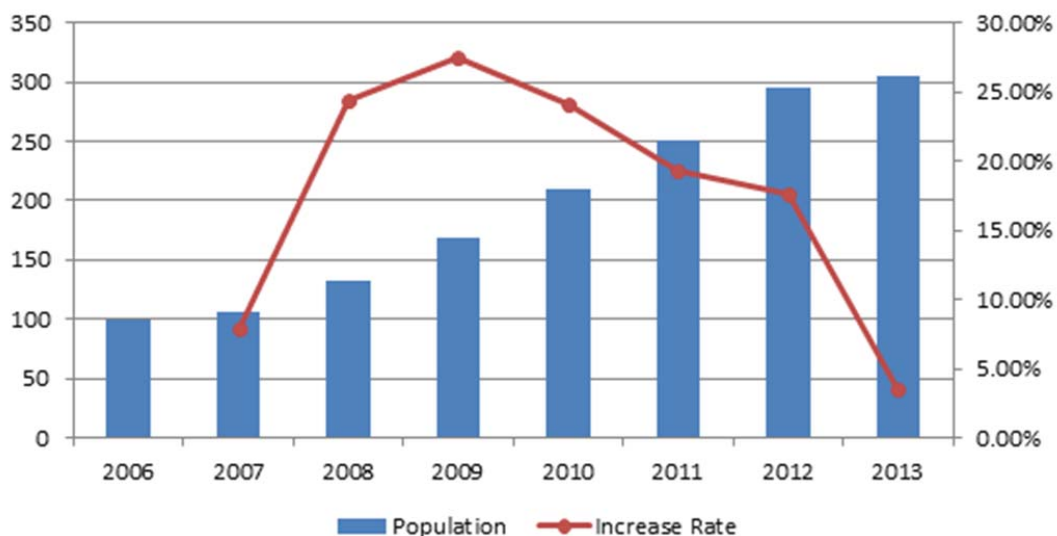


Fig. 1.1 Population of Chinese Students Studying Abroad (2006 to 2013, ten thousand people)

According to the American “Open Doors Report” from Institute of International Education (IIE): before 2008, the Indian were the largest part of international students; yet after 2009, Chinese became the largest group. The huge population of Chinese students in the U.S. has attracted the attention of many education institution agencies.

We found that the admission of top universities becomes rigorous and the admission rate drops, especially since the Financial Crisis in 2008 which leads to tremendously big changes of the economy, policy, and many other situations. It is not only because of the shrinking budget, but also because of a unavoidable gap between strict requirements of universities and Chinese applicants' qualifications like language competency, academic ability, communication skill, living capability, psychological adjustment ability, etc.

Although the increment of the Chinese students going abroad is becoming lower, the population of Chinese students in the U.S. still keeps growing. According to the Study Abroad Trend Report for 2014, which was conducted by Online China Education, the amount of Chinese students who study abroad to pursue bachelor or lower degrees is raising, and current Chinese overseas students are younger than those in past years.

Most of Chinese students in the United States are young, and are also lacking sufficient skills or experience to live alone. When they go abroad alone, the high workload, local social requirements, mental stress, culture shock of new environments are major issues that the Chinese students must confront and contend with. Obtaining the admission is just the first step of studying abroad. The following three to four years of life will be filled of challenges. Sometimes, if they face one issue improperly, they might face the critical punishment that they have never ever been thought of. Those occasions may not happen regularly in China, but they do frequently appear here! Will they be able to handle all of the stress and work coming from the strict requirements of schools?

1.2 The Meaning of this Analysis

Most Chinese parents believe that obtaining the admission automatically equals having a bright future. So do many Chinese students. However, it is not rare that a Chinese student put in huge efforts but cannot graduate from a U.S. high school or university. It is because that, compared with universities in China, universities in the United States are quite demanding in terms of academic integrity and graduation requirements. Dismissal is common for Chinese students while pursuing higher education in the United States.

Some students, as well as their parents, do not have a general understanding about different education systems and the situation in the U.S.A. So a series of severe problems may happen to students who do not have enough preparation for the future study and living in the U.S. Therefore, this study is intended to reveal such problems, especially on Chinese students in the United States.

This study first analyzes dismissed Chinese students' demographic information, such as gender, age, major, and degree. Next, the report studies correlations between personal information and reasons of dismissal, and summarizes the characteristics of Chinese students who are most likely expelled. Finally, the report offers some advice on overseas students.

2 Overview of Data Collection

By July 2014, WholeRen Education Consulting Database contains 492 useful data, which accounts for 95.5% of 515 raw data.

While conducting this survey, we focus on the following aspects: Name, Gender, Born Year, Age, Degree Pursuing, Major, University, National Rank¹, GPA, Record (Expel) Year, Reason of Dismissal.

2.1 An Example of Collecting Data

【The Reason of Dismissal】

H (alias) was dismissed by Vanderbilt University, whose national rank is 17, because of absence of final examinations last semester and moderate depressive symptoms. H's campus had a few Chinese students, and H was also so shy to make friends with Americans. When her American friends turned down her offer of ordering Chinese food, she thought she was discriminated. Apart from the disappointing communication, she felt depressed when her great efforts on study did not get well paid.

【Original Email from the Student】

I am H (alias). Thank you so much for helping me. I just met with the professor from ISSS, and got three choices: 1. Going back home, 2. Transferring to another university, and 3. Studying in a language institution. The staff will terminate my record in 10 days, and then there will be 15 grace days before I have to leave Vanderbilt University.

My mind is made to transfer to another university, because I want to prove my capability of learning. I finished my undergraduate degree in Fudan Univeristy, a Chinese Top 3 University, with high GPA. And I believe that the depression can be cured! Please find more information in the attachment, which is about the notice from my professor.

【The Process of Collecting Data】

The following is the description of the process how we find useful data for this survey. With the help of H's personal information like I-20, passport, and chatting records with professors, we find:

Name: H
Gender: Female
Born Year: 1992

¹ The National Rank from U.S.News is adopted by this survey.

Age: 22
Degree Pursuing: Bachelor
Major: Economics
University: Vanderbilt University
National Rank: 17
GPA: 0
Record Year: 2014
Reason of Dismissal: Psychological Problems

By repeating doing above process, almost all students' data from our WholeRen Consulting Database were collected. And with efforts of reorganizing, calculating, and doing correlative analysis, we are pleased to provide the following results.

2.2 The Basic Analysis of Personal Information

2.2.1 Gender

Among the dismissed Chinese students, 62% of them are males, and 38% are females.

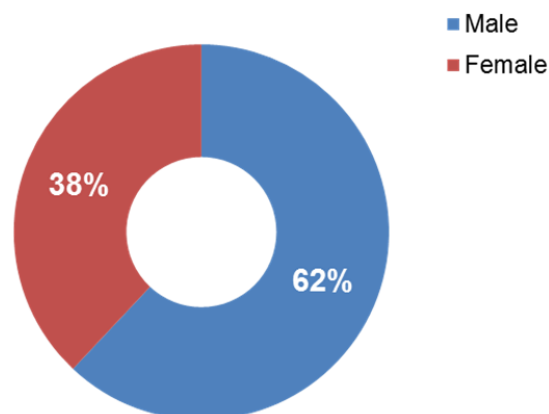


Fig. 2.2.1 Distribution of Dismissed Chinese Students' Gender

2.2.2 Age

Generally speaking, 18 to 22 are the age for an undergraduate degree and 23 to 25 is the age for a master degree. As shown in **Fig. 2.2.2**, most (90.9%) of the dismissed Chinese students are between 18 and 25 years old.

Below 18 years old: 4.0%,
18-22 year-old dismissed Chinese students: 63.0%,
23-25 year-old dismissed Chinese students: 27.9%,
Above 25 years old: 5.1%.

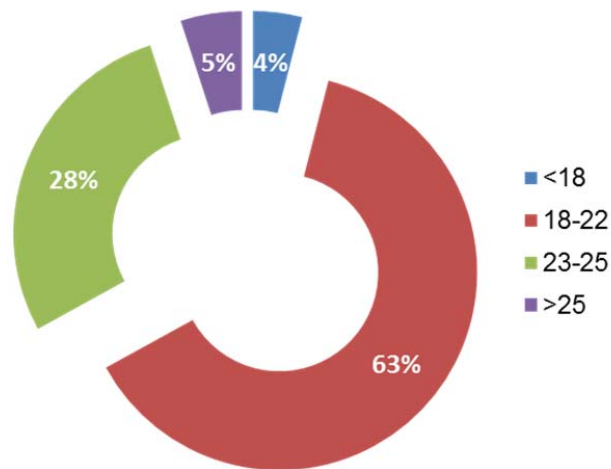


Fig. 2.2.2 Distribution of Dismissed Chinese Students' Age

2.2.3 National Rank of the University

Generally speaking, almost all schools will give probation to those students with low GPA. For an instance, undergraduates and graduates are required to get 2.0 GPA and 3.0 GPA standard respectively in order to register next semester. If those students still cannot improve their GPA in the next semester, they will be dismissed.

In this survey, 71.7% of dismissed Chinese students are from Top 100 American universities. It means that students need higher GPA to accomplish their degrees from high national rank universities.

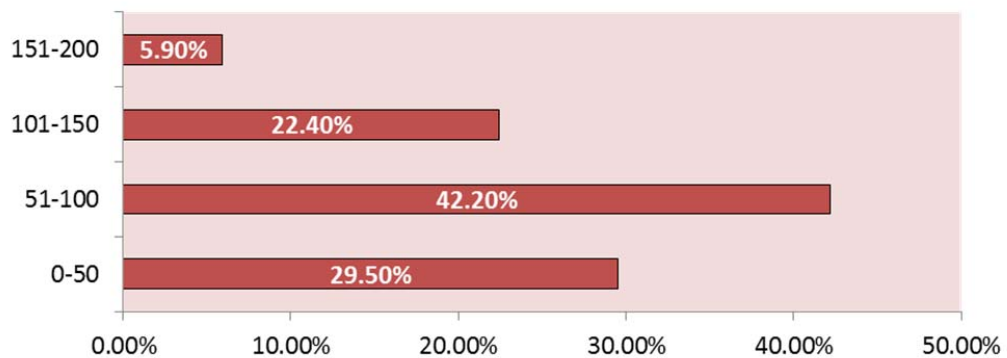


Fig. 2.2.3 Distribution of Universities' National Rank

2.2.4 Degree Pursuing

Like the conclusion made by the last White Paper, most samples (79.4%) are from bachelor programs and master programs, which is consistent with the age distribution above. As for this survey, each group takes up to the following percentage:

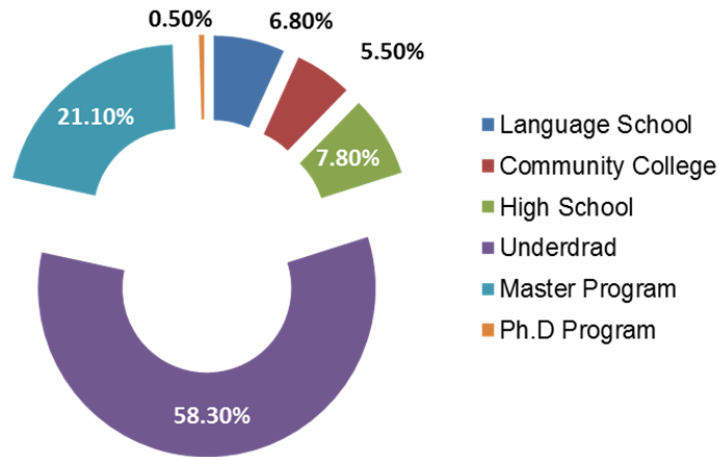


Fig. 2.2.4 Distribution of Dismissed Chinese Students' Pursuing Degree

2.2.5 Major

Among the surveyed dismissed Chinese students, more than half are majored at Sciences and Engineering (34.7%) or Economics (31.7%).

In order to describe every possible major in the collection, majors like Pre-major and General Studies are added. Pre-major means that the student is enrolled by a program, but still needs to finish an English as a Second Language course or program. General studies refer to the freshman who does not study in any major so far.

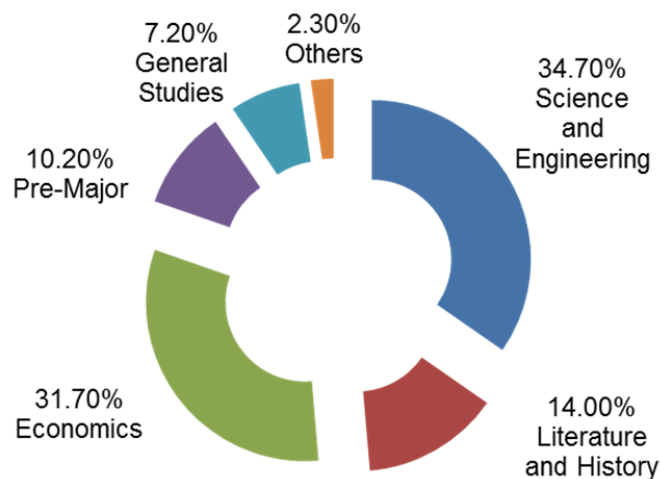


Fig. 2.2.5 Distribution of Dismissed Students' Major

2.2.6 GPA

Because every school has its own standard to dismiss students, we adopt a general standard for this survey: 2.0 GPA for undergraduates and 3.0 GPA for graduates.

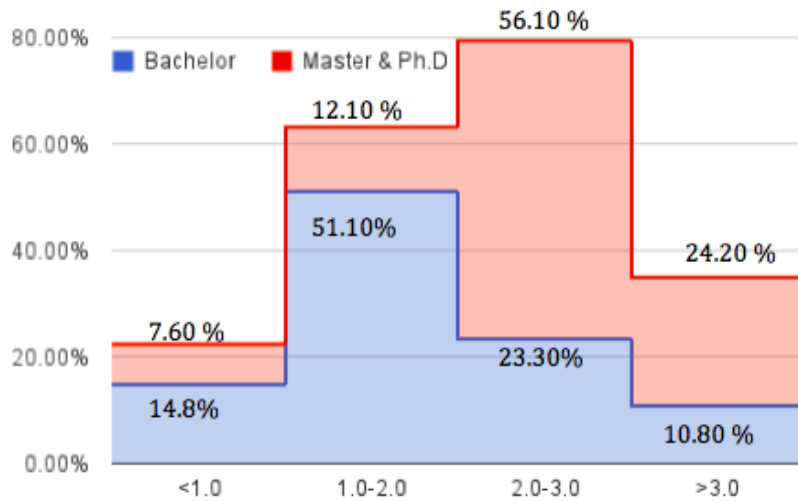


Fig. 2.2.6 Distribution of Dismissed Chinese Students' GPA

As shown in **Fig. 2.2.6**, more than half of sample Chinese undergraduates and graduates were dismissed due to low GPA problem, which are 65.9% and 75.8% respectively. Obviously, this is a serious problem for students of all ages.

3 Correlative Analysis of Reason of Dismissal

3.1 Reasons of Dismissal

Through collecting and cleaning up the data, we concluded 6 kinds of reasons of dismissal, which are Low GPA (62.1%), Low Attendance (10.9%), Breaking Laws (1.9%), Misbehavior² (2.9%), Academic Dishonesty (21.4%), and Psychological Problems (0.7%).

² The difference between misbehavior and Breaking laws is that the former happens in the campus and there is no need for legal sanction.

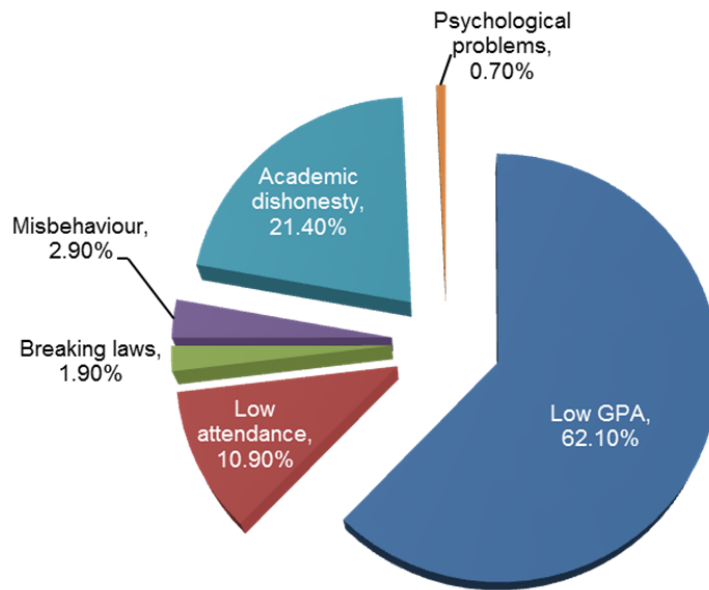


Fig. 3.1 Distribution of Reasons of Dismissal

Low GPA may occur when the student cannot adopt totally different environment or learning method. Some of them might never live far away from home, and therefore, without parents' care and supervise, they will easily lack self-restraint on their studies and lives. Take an instance, in 2.1: An Example of Collecting Data, H earned high GPA from China's Top 3 university, while was dismissed in the U.S. because of the depressive symptoms. There is another example:

Name: W (alias)
 Gender: Female
 Born Year: 1991
 Age: 23
 Degree Pursuing: Bachelor
 Major: Economics
 University: Lehigh University
 National Rank: 41
 GPA: 2.5
 Record Year: 2014
 Reason of Dismissal: Low GPA

It is reported that W's diligent impressed her advisor. Although she made great efforts to study, she failed to gain high scores.

Low attendance normally occurs on those teenagers who are addicted to playing computer games or get used to skipping classes. They might grow up with parents' care and

control. After coming to America and living by themselves, they cannot control themselves but spend too much time on entertainment. Otherwise, there are some other effects that lead to dismissal, such as not taking enough courses to maintain F1 status.

Breaking laws cases include the following examples: sexual assault, violate the traffic regulations, take guns illegally, involve in criminal case, take drugs or smoke under legal age, hide smoke or alcohol, use other's social security number and violate the privacy, stealing, and i-20 issue due to postponing the graduation.

Misbehavior covers the cases that students who have poor classroom performance, fight, or be accused of physical threats may be expelled. There is an example. C (alias) quarreled with his Brazil roommate while cooking supper, carrying a knife in his hand. And this roommate accused him of physical threat and got him expelled.

Academic dishonesty is a significant issue among Chinese students. Students are required to finish the assignments independently, and make citations if they refer someone else's works. However, Chinese students are not generally accustomed to this and do not pay sufficient attention to citation. Apart from the significant citation issue, the dismissed Chinese students also did: cheat in examinations or help others cheating, take a course or examination for an absent friend, make fake grades or professor's signature, or reserve last examination papers.

Psychological issues deal with the cases that are caused by high pressure from accustoming the way of learning and life style in America.

3.2 Comprehensive Correlative Analysis of Reason of Dismissal

3.2.1 Correlative Analysis of Reason of Dismissal and Gender

As mentioned in **Part 3.1: Reasons of Dismissal**, the most possible reason for Chinese students to be expelled is **Low GPA**. As shown in **Fig. 3.2.1**, there are much more expelled male Chinese students than female ones because of Low GPA, which reaches (40.6%, 18.8%). Also, the similar situation that the number of dismissed male exceeds female's exists upon the expel cases of **Misbehavior** and **Breaking Laws**, at (3.4%, 0.3%) and (3.1%, 0) respectively. It may be male's low self-restraint that contributes to the above high dismissal rate.

In the following reasons of dismissal, amounts of dismissed male and female Chinese students are similar: **Academic Dishonesty** at (10.6%, 11.6%) and **Low Attendance** at (5.5%, 5.5%). It's worth noting, that these two reasons are the next highest reasons of Chinese student being expelled by American schools.

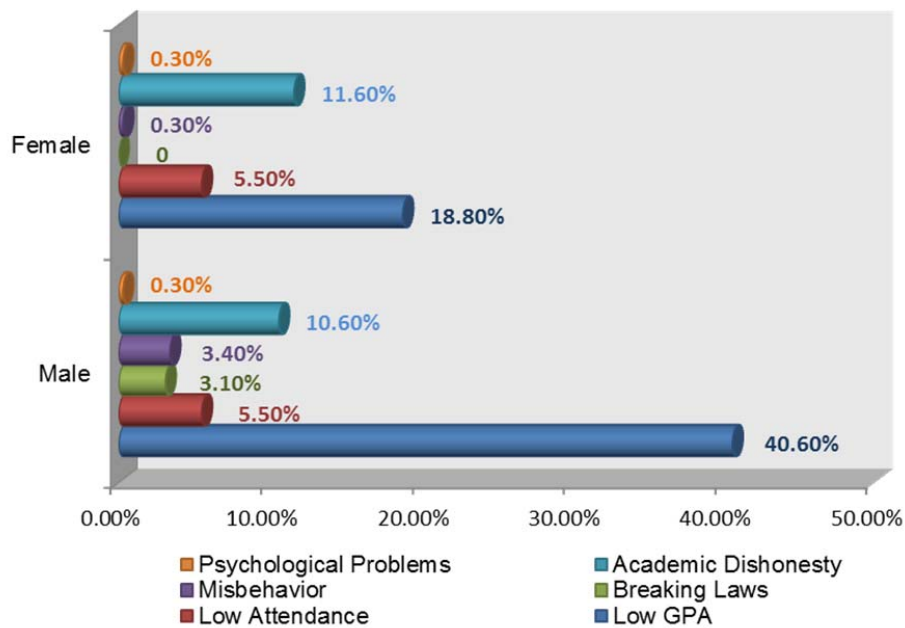


Fig. 3.2.1 Distribution of Reasons of Dismissal and Students' Gender

3.2.2 Correlative Analysis of Reason of Dismissal and Age

As shown in **Fig. 3.2.2**, each age section has feature:

There are $\frac{2}{3}$ under 18-year-old students are expelled due to **Misbehavior** and **Low GPA**.

As for most above-18-year-old students, **Low GPA**, **Academic Dishonesty** follows are the most likely reasons of dismissal.

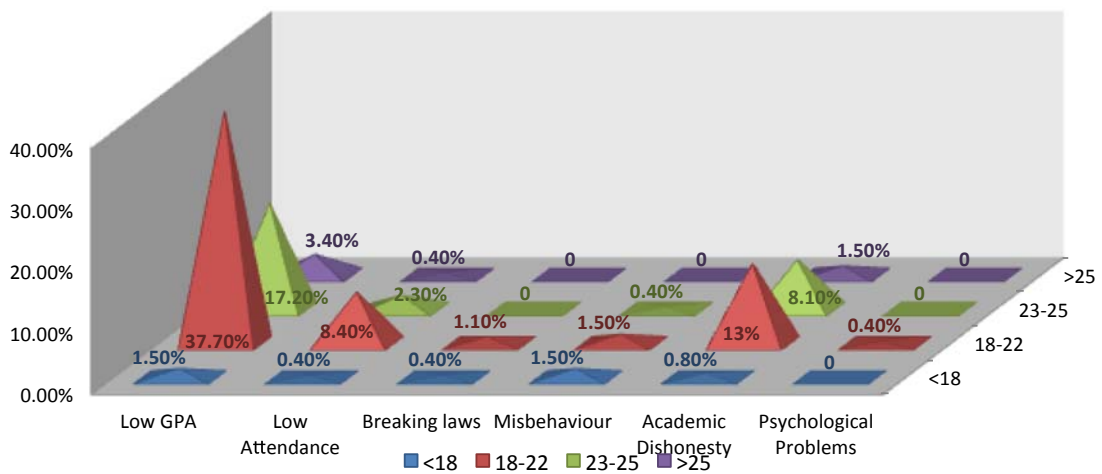


Fig. 3.2.2 Distribution of Reasons of Dismissal and Students' Age

As a small conclusion in this section, **Low GPA** is the most “popular” reason for Chinese student getting expelled by American schools. And other two reasons follow: **Misbehavior** for young Chinese, and **Academic Dishonesty** for elder ones.

Based upon WholeRen’s professionals’ experience of dealing with dismissed students’ cases, it is no difficult to guess that some teenagers may misbehave because of:

- lack self-discipline;
- not good at acclimating new environment;
- being too shy to communicate with Foreigners.

As elder students, who are dismissed for the reason of Academic Dishonesty, may:

- be not aware of citing;
- do not pay enough attention to cite;
- cannot tell whether to cite or not because of being unfamiliar with citation.

Thus, it can be seen that Chinese academic atmosphere is not as rigorous as that in the United States.

3.2.3 Correlative Analysis of Reason of Dismissal and National Rank

In this section, we attempt to discover what is the primary reason of dismissal for universities of different national rank. With this answer, Chinese students can rise vigilant and prevent themselves from being expelled.

As **Fig. 3.2.3** revealing, Top 200 schools pay close attention to students’ GPA and Academic Honesty. Therefore, the rate of Low GPA case is significantly high in the school of ranking 50 to 100. But Academic Dishonesty problem does not appear in the school of ranking 150 to 200.

3.2.4 Correlative Analysis of Reason of Dismissal and Degree Pursuing

Fig. 3.2.4 reveals several pinnacles of expelling reasons among ESLs, Community Colleges, High Schools, Undergraduate Programs, Graduate Programs, and Ph.D. Programs:

- ESL - Low Attendance;
- Community College - Low GPA;
- High Schools - Low GPA;
- Undergraduate and Graduate Program – Low GPA and Academic Dishonesty.

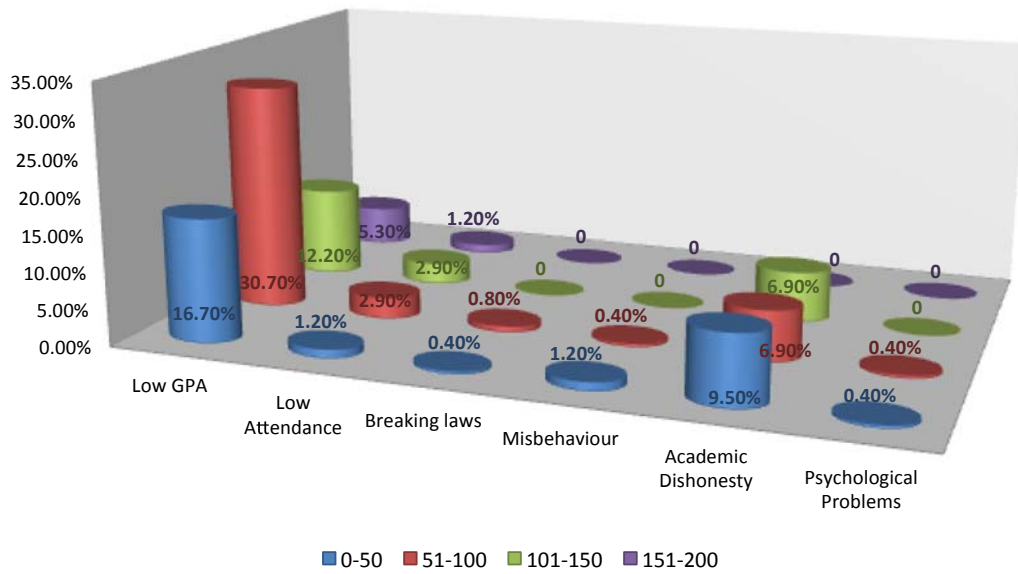


Fig. 3.2.3 Distribution of Reasons of Dismissal and Schools' National Rank

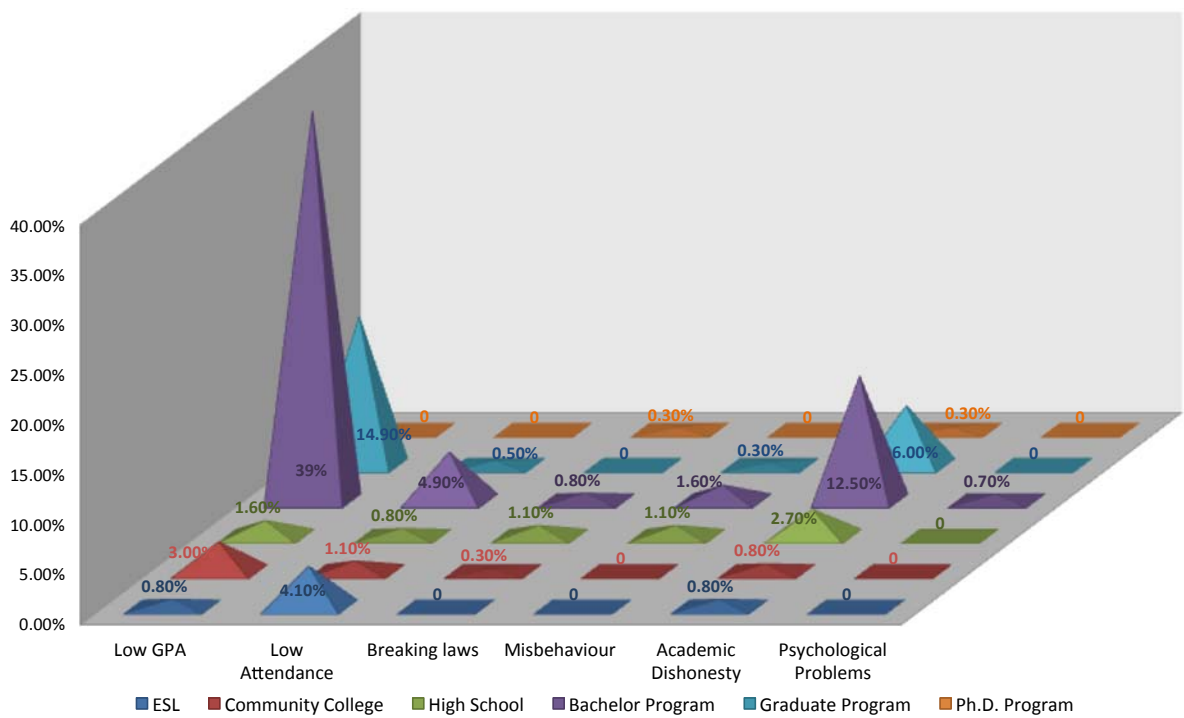


Fig. 3.2.4 Distribution of Reasons of Dismissal and Degree Pursuing

3.2.5 Correlative Analysis of Reason of Dismissal and Major

Fig. 3.2.5.1 demonstrates an order of “most dangerous major” in the United States:

Sciences and engineering (35.7%) > Economics (31.5%) > Literature and History (14.4%) > Pre-major (9.6%) > General Studies (6.4%) > Others (2.4%)

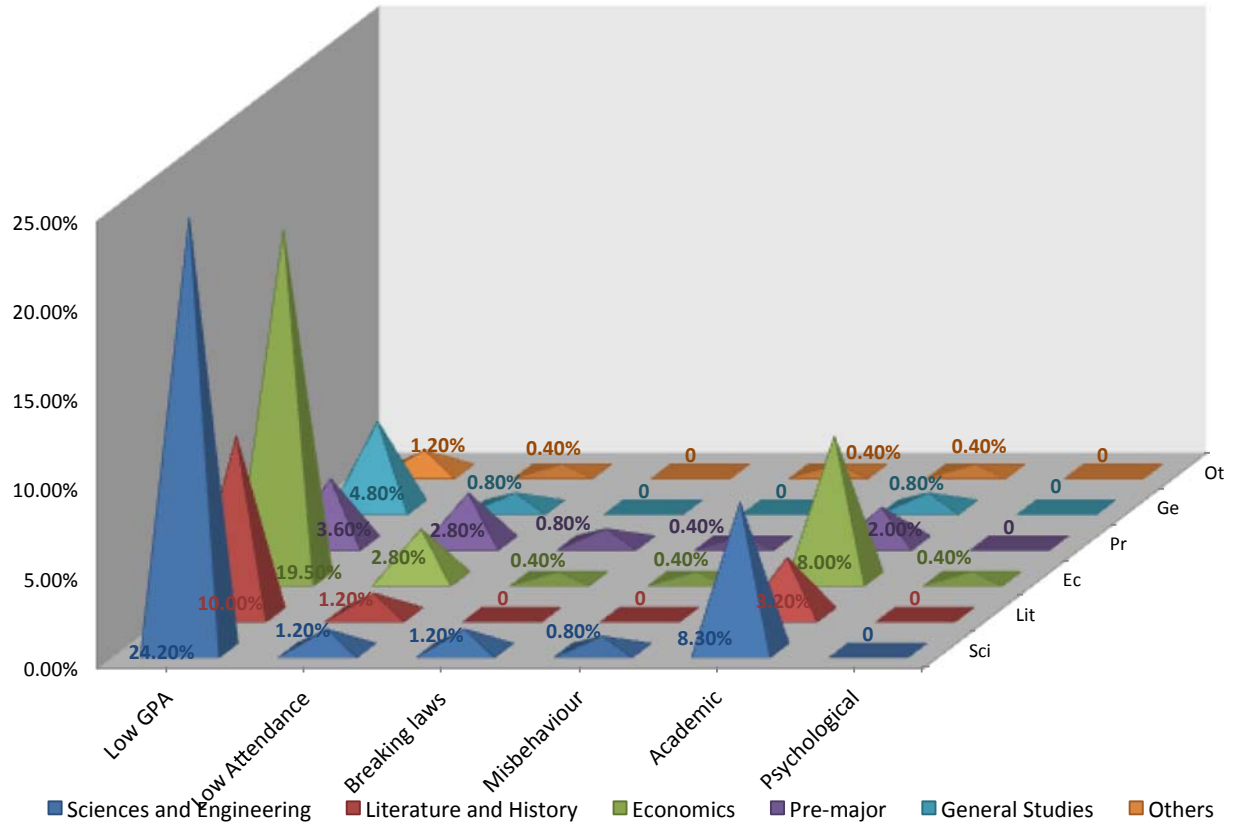


Fig. 3.2.5.1 Distribution of Reasons of Dismissal and Major

As already known from above Fig that two majors, Sciences and Engineering and Economics, are the most possibly dismissed majors, **Fig. 3.2.5.2** shows the percentage of dismissed Chinese males and females in these majors: Sci. at (26.2%, 10.2%) and Eco. at (17.4%, 12.8%). What worth mentioning is that there is no such difference between the numbers of expelled Chinese females and males in Economics major as those majored at Sciences and engineering. So we suspect that it is because the major of Economics is so popular in China. Chinese parents help their children choose popular major but do not consider their interests, traits, etc.

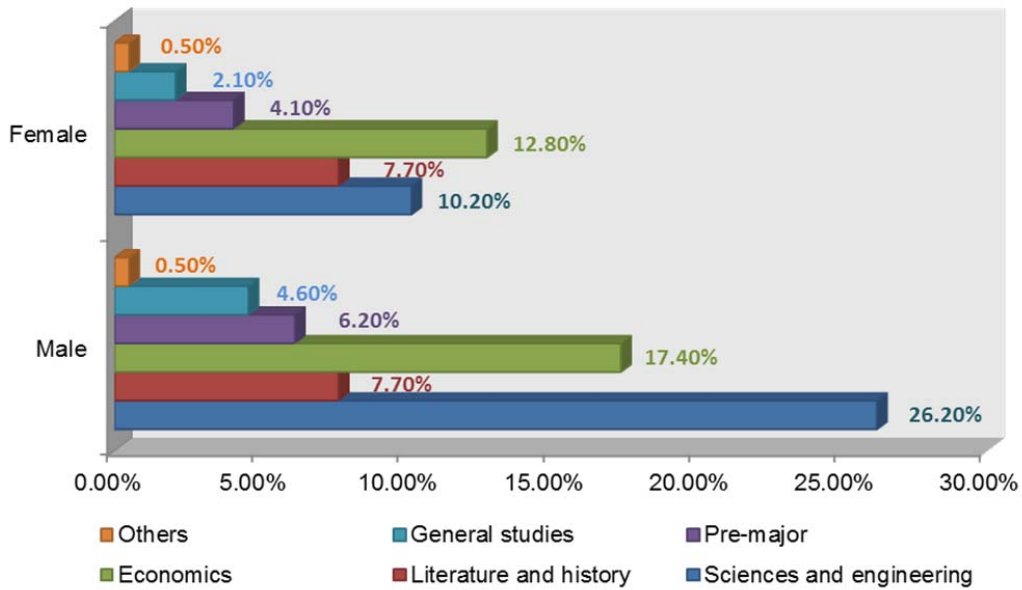


Fig. 3.2.5.2 Distribution of Major and Gender

3.3 Characteristics of Dismissed Chinese Students

While collecting data from WholeRen Consulting Database, we notice that the number of expelled Chinese male exceeds females at 62:38 (1.6 times). Based upon this fact, we conclude other features that probably lead Chinese male to be expelled: 18 to 22 years old, in Top 100 schools' Undergraduate or Graduate Programs, and major at Sciences and engineering or Economics. And they might be dismissed due to Low GPA or Academic Dishonesty.

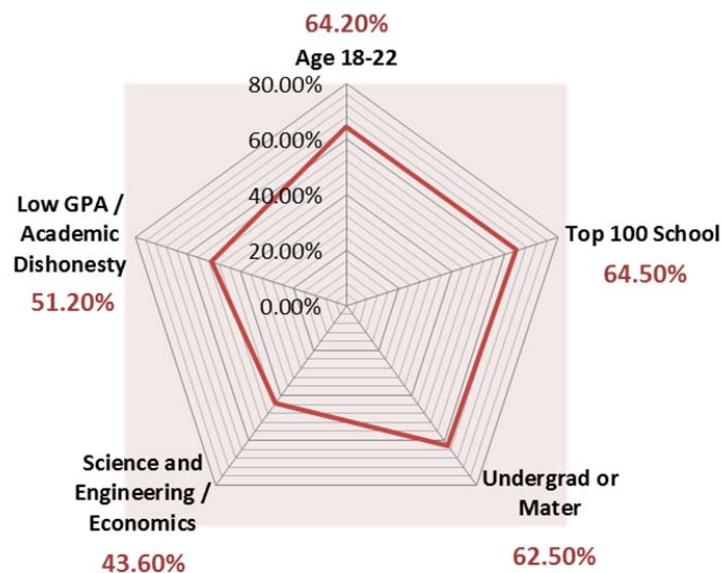


Fig. 3.3 Characteristics of Dismissed Chinese Male

3.4 Analysis of Reasons to Expel Good Students

Apart from above conclusion of characteristics of dismissed Chinese male students, there is also a doubt needs to be revolved: why some good students got expelled?

In order to find the group of “good students,” we set a standard:

High school students whose GPA is above 2.0,
Undergraduates whose GPA is above 3.0,
Graduates and Ph.D. whose GPA is 3.5.

The number of this group reaches 8.5% of total samples. And as **Fig. 3.4** showing, more than half (78.4%) got expelled because of Academic Dishonesty. This confirms the conclusion that was made in section 3.2.2: “It can be seen that Chinese academic atmosphere is not as rigorous as that in the United States. Chinese education system does not emphasize a lot on respecting others’ intelligence outcome.”

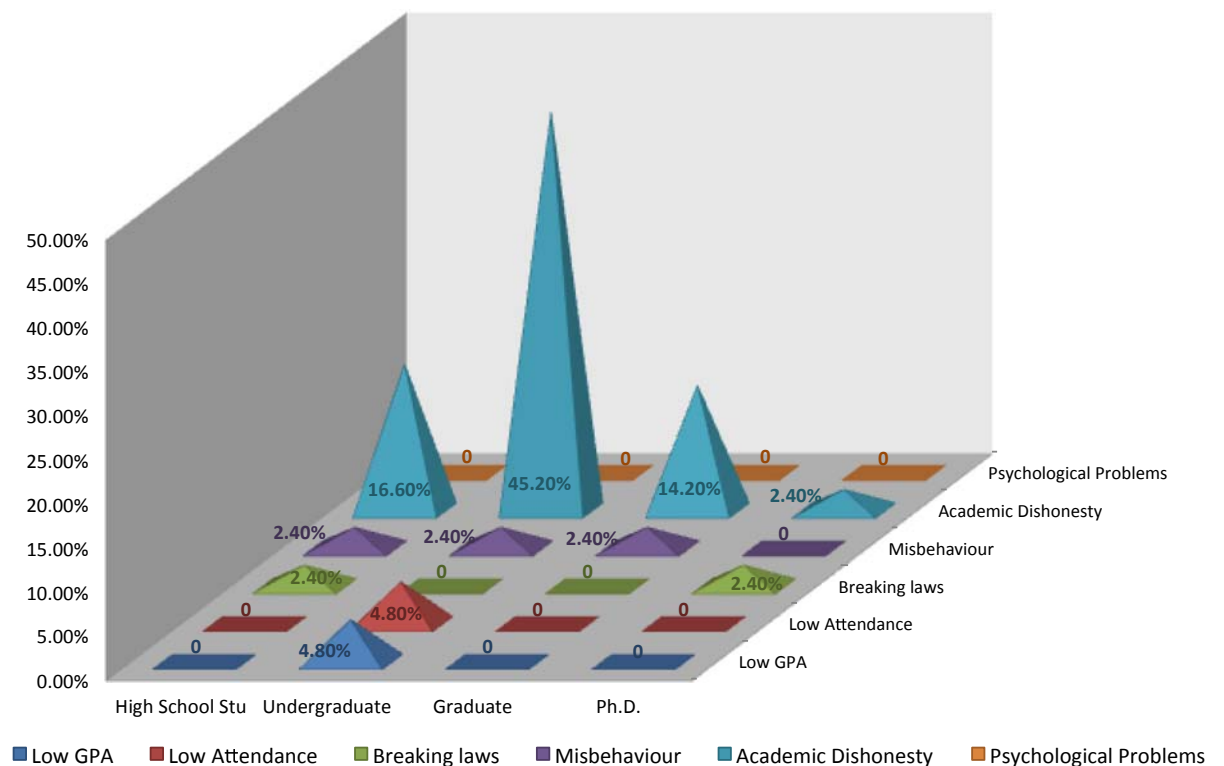


Fig. 3.4 Distribution of Reasons to Expel Good Students

4. Conclusion and Suggestion

4.1 Case Study of Emergency Services

【Emergency Case Study】

Name: L (alias)
Gender: Female
Degree Pursuing: High School
GPA: 3.87

Background: This student will graduate from high school very soon, and have already received the admission offer from NYU. In the final exam, this student got full score because she was well prepared for the exam and found some past exam resources online. However, this was considered as cheating in the exam and the school might withdraw the units.

【Result】

With the coordination of WholeRen Education, this student can go back to China and take the official online course at home. After finishing the online course, the school will mail her the graduate certification. This student successfully completed the online course. The problem was solved. L finally entered NYU and began her undergraduate study.

During this procedure, it is worth noticing that Chinese schools and American schools treat cheating or other misbehavior differently. A Chinese student will never think of such a condition that doing well preparation and getting full scores in the exam may be considered as cheating in the United States. This culture gap is not paid attention to by most of the Chinese students in US. Once those problems happen, they do not know the proper action or treatment. This situation will make many problems more urgent and serious.

Based on the analysis, 69.1% students who come to WholeRen Education for help have already gotten the final expelling decision. However, 30.9% students come to WholeRen before that final decision, and this action will give students more time and flexibility to handle such a problem.

4.2 Suggestions for Schools and Parents

Because of generation gap, parents and school staff sometimes do not understand the students. This may make students rebellious and get situation worse. Plus, based on fact that Chinese students going abroad are younger in recent years, it becomes much more urgent to provide guidance for overseas Chinese students in various majors at different ages.

Therefore, the following suggestions are put forward by WholeRen Education to schools and parents:

1) Emphasizing finishing homework and examination independently, and writing reference if it refers to someone else's intelligence outcome.

2) For students who are studying in high school and community college, the essence of attendance should be emphasized.

3) For teenagers who do not have enough self-restraint, parents should pay close attention upon their studies and daily lives.

4) As for children who are relying on parents heavily, families should adopt every possible communicating tools, such as FaceTime and international phone calls, to talk about daily happenings and make strong emotional connection. What is more, parents should encourage children to go out and make as many friends as possible.

5) A suitable major is much better than a popular major. Parents and school staff should help students to choose what they are really interested in, but not the most popular major in current trend.

6) As for emergent issues, parents and students should take proper actions and pay attention as early as possible, in order to obtain ideal results. As far as concerned, they should turn to professionals for helps immediately.

WholeRen Education, LLC has helped over one thousand students in avoiding or solving their emergency issue, and brought them back to the right track of studies and lives, based on our insight of the U.S. education system from the point of view of Chinese students. WholeRen will assist students and parents in avoiding academic issues, and protecting the legal rights and interests of students.

From our experience of advising these students, the best time to intervene is when these Chinese students receive their first academic warning or, better yet, before the warning. Also, both academic and psychological counseling can help these students get back on track academically.

Reference

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