

“Slow” Employment: Research on the Psychological Profile and Its Mechanism --Analysis of Employment Tendency and Countermeasures of the New Generation of College Students

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Abstract: In recent years, the number of college graduates has repeatedly hit record highs. Graduates have ushered in one after another “the most difficult employment year.” Employment is the biggest livelihood of the people. In 2019, Guangdong Province abolished “postponing employment”. Employment issues present new space for discussion. Some people compete intensively at job fairs, but there are also people who are willing to do things that are contrary to formal employment. They'd like to choose to have oversea study tours and support education, accompany their parents at home or start an investigation of starting a business, etc. The latter is called “slow employment”. Among them, one type of “slow employment” is purposeful “idle”. “Slow” is for better work in the future, which is regarded as active “slow employment”. The other type of “slow employment” is blind “idle”. Graduates will lose the direction of job hunting in the “slow” and it will be regarded as a passive “slow employment”. In order to portray college students’ “slow employment” tendency and its “double-edged sword” effect, and construct a psychological guidance and intervention plan, the project team randomly selected 784 college students from 14 universities in the Pearl River Delta to conduct a questionnaire survey, supplemented by interview analysis. The research results show that ① The structure of “slow employment” presents four dimensions: slow time, slow economic pressure, slow career exploration behavior, and slow attitude. The tendency score of slow employment is at a moderately low level; ② About the influence of demographic variables on “slow employment”, the trend of “slow employment” is more obvious among male graduates than females, only children than non-only children, and private colleges than public colleges; ③ Analysis of the antecedent variables of “slow employment” shows that in addition to fierce employment competition, national employment policies, with the influence of pressure factors such as untimely understanding of employment information, can't finding a job that meets their expectations, and unclear career planning, factors such as “value management”-oriented study tours and entrepreneurship have also reached a significant level; ④ Hierarchy regression analysis results of the moderating effect model shows that parents’ attitudes towards “slow employment” weaken the impact of college students’ career planning on “slow employment tendency”. Based on this, the team constructed psychological intervention countermeasures: ① Under the premise of respecting the “slow employment” of college students, according to the relevant theories of “value management”, guiding college students to transform from passive “slow employment” to positive; ② Gathering Individuals, families, schools, governments and enterprises together to build a “slow employment” service platform for college students, and plan to provide personalized “slow employment” profile and strategies through the platform big data.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the number of fresh graduates has repeatedly hit new highs, and graduates have ushered in the “hardest employment year” after another. At the same time, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out in his speech that employment is the foundation of people's livelihood, and employment must be guaranteed well. Guangdong Province has also introduced the policy of cancelling the postponing employment time. Under the new basic contradictions of socialism, the issue of “employment” has raised new discussion. Against such a social background, the project team found a new situation in “employment”. College students are not anxious to have a job after graduation. They'd like to wait for opportunities in other ways and slowly explore their careers. For example, they prefer to study abroad, take postgraduate entrance examinations, take civil service examinations, go for education support trips, do self-employment, being purchasing agents, or being WeChat sellers, etc. They all belong to the “slow employment” group. According to *2018 Employment Report for Chinese College Students (Employment Blue Book)* released by Mycos [1], only 71.4% of graduates were employed in full-time jobs six months after graduation in 2017. Moreover, the proportion of graduates who entered universities in 2017 and were employed in full-time jobs six months after graduation (77.1%) is basically the same as that of the 2016 and 2015 (77.3% and 77.4%, respectively). In this way, nearly 30% of people chose “slow employment”, which is enough to prove that “slow employment” has become a social issue worthy of attention.

Regarding the causes of slow employment, Wang Qin (2018) [2], Pan Kai (2019) [3], Pan Ying (2019) [4] and other scholars deconstructed the topic from the aspects of the boundaryless career, supply-side structural reform and attribution theory respectively. Hua Peipei (2019) [5] analyzed the influencing factors of slow employment based on employment surveys for medical college students. Many scholars approached from the perspective of intervention paths. Zhang Chunbo (2017) [6] demonstrated from the perspective of employability training and career choice education. Zhang Yihui (2018) [7] analyzed it from the aspects that governments optimized entrepreneurship and employment ecology, higher learning institutions strengthened education reforms, and enterprises renewed the employment value. Chen Fang (2018) [8] suggested that the promotion of innovation and entrepreneurship education should be adopted to deal with the slow employment trend.

Existing literature only explains the influencing factors and measures of this phenomenon for people who have already chose “slow employment”, and there is no measurement or empirical research on the tendency. Thus, the research of this project team is necessary.

2. Research Design

2.1 Questionnaire Design and Test for Reliability and Validity

On the basis of reference to the existing literature, the project team interviewed a number of teachers responsible for student employment and juniors and seniors to summarize the main points and finalized the formal questionnaire after revisions. The questionnaire consists of three parts. The first part measures the tendency of “slow employment”, the second part is the influencing factors, and the third part is demographic information. The first two parts of the measurement are based on Likert's five-level score, from 1 to 5, with increasing degrees. Data processing uses SPSS20 and Amos20 software packages.

Exploratory factor analysis was implemented based on 400 valid samples. After two principal component analysis and varimax-rotation method, deleting the questions which the load value is less than 0.45, crossed the load and the questions are not related to most of the questions of the factor. In the end, a total of 10 formal questions was gotten, 4 factors explained 60.524% of the total variation. (see Table 1)

Table 1 Factor Loading Table

Questions	Dimension 1: Slow	Dimension 2: Slow	Dimension 3: Slow economic pressure 12.383%	Dimension 4: Slow time

	career exploration 23.346%	attitude 15.907%		8.888%
①After graduation, there are people around you who have not formally employed for a period of time. What is your attitude towards this?		.785		
②After graduation, your friend didn't get a job right away and chose to do what he was interested in. What is your attitude towards this?		.860		
③ Based on your regular monthly expenditure standards, even if you find a formal job after graduation, you will not be able to balance your income and expenditures.			.748	
④Although many people find so-called formal jobs when they graduate, this is often not a wise choice.			.693	
⑤ Once you have no formal employment after graduation, are your family members or friends willing to provide you with sufficient financial support to ensure your daily life?			.466	
⑥ If you are not employed immediately after graduation, will you be anxious?				.780
⑦From graduation to the first job, What is the longest interval you can accept?				.772
⑧Pay attention to employment (or entrepreneurship) policies and measures issued by schools and the local government	.793			
⑨Participate in social practice or corporate internship	.778			
⑩Have career plans	.801			
Participate in various skills, entrepreneurship competitions, or entrepreneurial project operations	.746			

The confirmatory factor analysis was carried out based on another 384 valid samples, and all the fitting indicators of the four-dimensional structure reached the requirements of statistics, which had good stability. (see Table 2)

Table 2 Fitting Indicators Of the Model

Model	χ^2/df	GFI	AGFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Four-dimensional model	1.279	0.978	0.962	0.963	0.974	0.027
General standard	<5	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	<0.08

The Cronbach's alpha of the four-dimensional questionnaire is 0.71, and the alpha coefficient of each dimension ranges from 0.6 to 0.75.

2.2 Research Objects

The project team randomly surveyed 807 college students from 14 colleges and universities, and got 784 valid questionnaires (effective rate 97.1%), of which 36.6% were males and 63.4% were females; the freshmen accounted for 20.3%, sophomores accounted for 52.6% , juniors accounted for 18.1%, and seniors accounted for 9.1%; among the colleges and universities, private schools accounted for 84.4%; public schools 15.6%; the majority of students majored in economics and management, followed by engineering, art, literature and law, and medical specialty; only children accounted for 24.5%, non-only children accounted for 75.5%.

3. Data Analysis Results

3.1 The General Average Distribution of “Slow Employment” Tendency

The total average score is 2.94±0.4, and the skewness coefficient of the distribution is 0.171, which is slightly to the right. Most of the interviewees score at a moderately low level. (see Table 3)

3.2 The Impact of Demographic Variables on “Slow Employment”

Table 3 Demographic Distribution Of “Slow Employment” Scores

		Total average score	Slow attitude	Slow economic pressure	Slow time	Slow career exploration
Gender	female	2.9389	3.5865	3.1066	1.6408	3.1383
	male	2.9550	3.5645	3.1034	1.8711	3.0810
	Independent sample T test	T=-0.517	T=0.397	T=0.074	T=-5.066***	T=0.971
Only children	no	2.9237	3.5397	3.0867	1.7027	3.1039
	yes	3.0099	3.6979	3.1632	1.7943	3.1589
	Independent sample T test	T=-2.590*	T=-2.555*	T=-1.557	T=-1.773	T=-0.831
School type	public	2.9001	3.6516	3.1585	1.6475	2.9570
	private	2.9530	3.5650	3.0957	1.7394	3.1469
	Independent sample T test	T=-1.334	T=1.176	T=1.077	T=-1.499	T=-2.429*
Grade	freshman	2.9114	3.4843	2.9853	1.7296	3.1604
	sophomore	2.9850	3.5910	3.1197	1.7876	3.1796
	junior	2.8585	3.4718	3.1526	1.5739	2.9736
	senior	2.9590	3.9296	3.1972	1.6549	2.9472
	One Way ANOVA	F=3.985**	F=7.218***	F=3.157*	F=4.539**	F=3.655*
	Multiple comparisons	sophomore > freshman *,junior **	senior > freshman *,sophomore *,junior *	freshman < sophomore *,junior *,senior *	junior < freshman *,sophomore *	freshman > junior *,sophomore > junior *,senior *

Note: * represents $P < 0.05$, ** represents $P < 0.01$, *** represents $P < 0.001$

The experiment used independent sample T test (T value) or One Way ANOVA (F value) to compare differences. Higher scores were gotten by males, only children, and private schools.

3.3 Analysis of Influencing Factors of “Slow Employment” Tendency

Sort the “slow employment total average score” from low to high. According to psychometric standards, the top 27% ($784 \times 0.27 = 212$ people) are set as the low-score group, and the last 27% (212 people) are the high-score group. Using the independent sample T test to investigate the differences in the scores of various influencing factors between high and low groups. (see Table 4)

Table 4 Tests on The Difference of the Influencing Factors of “Slow Employment”

	Groups	Sample size	Average value	Standard deviation	T value
Fierce competition for employment	high-score group	212	3.59	1.287	-2.734**
	low-score group	212	3.90	1.046	
National employment policy impact	high-score group	212	3.13	1.109	-2.283*
	low-score group	212	3.36	.971	
Untimely understanding of employment information	high-score group	212	3.45	1.185	-2.718*
	low-score group	212	3.74	.985	
Can't find a job that meets expectations	high-score group	212	3.56	1.132	-2.034*
	low-score group	212	3.77	.963	
Career planning is not clear	high-score group	212	3.35	1.098	-3.493**
	low-score group	212	3.71	1.043	
Lack of professional	high-score group	212	3.42	1.184	-2.912**

competence	low-score group	212	3.74	1.047	
Insufficient social communication skills	high-score group	212	3.38	1.105	-0.888
	low-score group	212	3.47	1.082	
Lack of practical ability and work experience	high-score group	212	3.53	1.095	-1.933*
	low-score group	212	3.73	1.066	
Want to start your own business (including internet celebrities, live streaming, procurement service, etc.)	high-score group	212	2.40	1.190	-4.644***
	low-score group	212	2.94	1.215	
After graduation, want to increase my knowledge through teaching and study tours	high-score group	212	2.59	1.175	-3.570***
	low-score group	212	2.99	1.110	
Good family conditions, no rush to get a job	high-score group	212	2.25	1.189	-1.642
	low-score group	212	2.45	1.236	
The cost of finding a job is huge (the cost of housing, car fare, meals, etc.)	high-score group	212	2.83	1.145	-1.669
	low-score group	212	3.02	1.239	
Prepare for civil service examinations, postgraduate examinations, participate in skill training and obtain certificates	high-score group	212	2.84	1.332	-4.444***
	low-score group	212	3.38	1.176	

Note: * represents $P < 0.05$, ** represents $P < 0.01$, *** represents $P < 0.001$

In addition to fierce employment competition, national employment policies, untimely understanding of employment information, not finding a job that meets the expectations, and unclear career planning, the impact of factors such as study tours and entrepreneurship with the “value management” orientation is also significant.

3.4 Moderating Effect Model Test

With “career planning” as the independent variable, “total average slow employment” as the dependent variable, and “parents' attitudes towards slow employment” as the moderating variable, by using hierarchical regression analysis, the moderating effect of parents' attitudes was verified (see Table 5). Parental attitudes weakened the impact of career planning on slow employment tendency (regression coefficient of the interaction term is negative), making the original career planning influence effect disappear (the regression coefficient corresponding to career planning is not significant). It can be inferred from this that no matter how clear the career plans of the schools or students are, once the parents are indifferent to employment, they will eventually increase the tendency to slow employment. Parents' attitudes and educational methods need to be taken seriously.

Table 5 Hierarchical Regression Analysis Report of Moderating Effect Models

Regression model	ΔR^2	F value	Independent variable	Standard regression coefficient	T value
Model 1	0.033	26.328***	career planning	-0.180	-5.131***
Model 2	0.030	25.172***	career planning	-0.172	-4.973***
			parents' attitudes	0.174	5.017***
Model 3	0.005	4.410*	career planning	0.048	0.431

			parents' attitudes	0.403	3.521***
			career planning × parents' attitudes	-0.319*	-2.100*

4. Countermeasures and Suggestions

4.1 Individual

The first is to establish a correct concept of job selection and employment. On the one hand, graduates should raise their own awareness of worries and recognize the severe employment situation early. They should not only be greedy for pleasure and should be encouraged to work from a primary level. On the other hand, they should accurately position themselves and rationally evaluate indicators such as their academic qualifications and abilities, have realistic understanding about the company's salary and employment environment. They should apply for the position that suits themselves. The second is to improve their professional quality and increase their core competitiveness.

4.2 Family

Family guidance is worthy of attention. Parents should have a correct outlook on career choices, create a good micro-environment that is conducive to the employment of their children, and reduce the "slow employment" to the vicious development. It is helpful to create a democratic and open family atmosphere, cultivate children's ability to distinguish right from wrong, respect children's choices, use their own relationships to help children make "better" choices. They should also get rid of the traditional concept of "conservative stability" and the preference for "iron rice bowls". At the same time, they must avoid blind care and indulgence, and encourage children to compete independently.

4.3 School

First of all, the corresponding departments of the school should integrate their own connections and resources, hold more recruitment fairs, introduction meetings and a series of activities, so as to broaden students' application channels, and promote school-enterprise cooperation. They can formulate teaching plans based on the needs of the era and employers, so that the employment success rate of college students can be effectively improved. Secondly, schools can organize various activities such as college graduate employment and entrepreneurship competitions, entrepreneurial project exhibitions or salons, jointly organize entrepreneurial resources, and establish connections with social organizations such as trade platforms and youth maker funds to improve the efficiency of entrepreneurship.

4.4 Government

Governments at all levels need to regulate the labor market environment and implement social security. Although "slow employment" is a two-way choice, "slow employment" people are largely restricted and selected by the employment market, resulting in the obvious disadvantages of "slow employment". The governments need to include the social security of college students as legal workers in the labor law, and properly formulate various laws, regulations and policies before the governments can administer it in accordance with the law.

5. Acknowledgment

1).Key scientific research platform and scientific research project of regular institutions of higher learning in Guangdong Province in 2018-Entrepreneurship Failure: Evade or Face It? --The Construction of the Management System for the Failure of "Mass Entrepreneurship and Innovation" Among Students in Private Higher Learning Institutions (Project Number: 2018WTSCX239)

2).The 2019 "Climbing Plan" Guangdong university student science and technology innovation

cultivation special fund project-An Exploratory Research on the Management of Undergraduate Entrepreneurship Failure Against the Background of “Mass Entrepreneurship and Innovation”-Based on the Behavior Investigation and Analysis of Entrepreneurship Failure (Project Number: pdjh2019b0677);

3).2020 national college student innovation and entrepreneurship training project- Industrial Interconnection Smart Door Factory (Project Number: 202012618005X);

4).2020 national college student innovation and entrepreneurship training project- Research on the Cultivation Path of Customer Loyalty of College Students’ “Mass Entrepreneurship and Innovation” Products (Project Number: S202012618008);

5).2020 student innovation and entrepreneurship training project of South China Institute of Software Engineering.GU- Slowness Creates Quality or Deterioration? Investigation on the Status Quo of “Slow Employment” of College Students and Analysis of Coping Strategies (Project Number: DCXM2019052)

6).The 2019 Education and teaching research project- Research on the Entrepreneurship Guidance and Service System of Colleges and Universities in the New Era (Project Number: ky201930).

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