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Exploration of Factors Influencing Slow Employment

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Abstract

This article focuses on the causes and characteristics of the phenomenon of "slow employment" of college graduates and its far-reaching impact on individuals and society in the context of current social and economic development. Through a review of relevant literature and theoretical research, the article outlines the definition of "slow employment", i.e., the state in which some graduates, after completing their studies, choose to further their studies, internships, travels or other non-employment activities, or fail to find a suitable job for a long period of time.

It is found that the phenomenon of "slow employment" is the result of multiple factors, such as the popularization of higher education, changes in the job market and personal values. The article constructs a research model, and through questionnaire survey and data analysis, explores the influence of individual perceived behavioral control, prior and posterior social capital, and educational environment on the willingness of "slow employment". The results show that factors such as personal behavioral control, family background, educational experience and social network affect graduates' employment choice and speed to different degrees.

Eventually, the article puts forward a series of targeted solution strategies, including strengthening the employment guidance services of colleges and universities, optimizing the educational environment, and enhancing the individual's career planning ability, aiming to provide support for the smooth employment of college graduates, and at the same time, provide a scientific basis for the government and colleges and universities to formulate the employment policy, in order to promote the stable development of the social economy.

Keywords

slow employment, college graduates, factors, employment choice, solution strategies

1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of current social and economic development, the employment of college graduates has always been a hot topic of concern for all sectors of society. With the popularization of higher education and the year-on-year increase in the number of graduates, the traditional mode of "employment upon graduation" is facing unprecedented challenges. In particular, the increasingly common phenomenon of "slow employment" has aroused extensive social discussion and concern. The so-called "slow employment" refers to the fact that some college graduates do not enter the job market quickly after completing their studies, but choose to further their studies, internships, travel or other non-employment activities, or fail to find suitable job opportunities for a long time. The emergence of this phenomenon is not only the result of multiple factors such as the massification of higher education, changes in the job market and changes in personal values, but also reflects some deep-rooted problems in the current employment situation. For college graduates, "slow employment" may mean more time for self-exploration and ability enhancement, but at the same time it may also bring economic pressure and uncertainty of career development. For the society, it may affect the effective allocation of talents and the healthy development of economy. Therefore, this thesis aims to deeply explore the causes and characteristics of the phenomenon of "slow employment" of college graduates and its impact on individuals and society, and to propose a corresponding solution path on this basis. Through the systematic analysis of this phenomenon, we expect to provide reference for the employment guidance service of college graduates, provide the basis for the employment policy formulation of the government and colleges and universities, and at the same time, contribute to the promotion of the smooth employment of college graduates and the stable development of the social economy. In the following paper, we will firstly review the relevant literature to sort out the current research status and theoretical basis of the phenomenon of "slow employment". Then, we will analyze the multiple reasons for the phenomenon of "slow employment" and explore its potential impact on the personal development of college graduates and the social economy. Finally, we will put forward targeted strategies and suggestions in order to provide effective ways and means to deal with the phenomenon of "slow employment". Through this study, we hope to provide a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the employment problems of college graduates and a scientific basis for the formulation and implementation of relevant policies.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Overview of the Slow Employment Phenomenon

In the context of the new era, the macro background of rapid socio-economic development and the micro environment of the gradual decline of family economic pressure and the pursuit of personalized development of some college students make the employment of college graduates show new characteristics of the times (Liu, 2019), some college students do not follow the traditional concept of "graduation to join the workforce", and after completing their studies, they do not immediately enter

the workforce, but choose to continue their studies, wait for employment or try to start a business. Some college students do not follow the traditional concept of "joining the work after graduation", and after completing their studies, they don't put themselves into the work immediately, but choose to continue their studies, wait for employment or try to start their own business (Li, 2019). The time limit for "slow employment" is usually half a year to two years after graduation, and if the time limit is exceeded and the status of not being employed is not changed, "slow employment" will evolve into "not being employed" (Li & Zhang, 2024).

2.2 Study of Factors Influencing Slow Employment

Maslow and other behavioral psychologists believe that the hierarchy of needs of the majority of people in a country is directly related to the country's level of economic development, scientific and technological development, culture and the level of education of the people (Liu, 2008). The phenomenon of "slow employment" is a product of social and economic development to a certain extent, and is an external manifestation of the main contradiction of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, which has a certain degree of contemporaneity and objectivity (Jiang & Liu, 2020). In recent years, China's economic growth has been stabilizing at a slow pace, and under the new normal, economic development is facing new risks and challenges. Due to the impact of industrial transformation and upgrading and the development of new technologies such as artificial intelligence and mobile Internet, various industries, especially the traditional industries, are becoming increasingly saturated with jobs, and the demand for recruiting is decreasing gradually, while at the same time, the number of fresh graduates from colleges and universities has been increasing year by year, and the problem of matching the supply and demand of employment is becoming more and more obvious. At the same time, the number of fresh college graduates is increasing year by year, so the problem of matching the supply and demand of the total employment is becoming more and more obvious (Ma & Deng, 2019). The "slow employment" of college students includes both active and passive slow employment, and the slow employment caused by the lack of self-identification of college students is a kind of passive slow employment. Due to the influence of personality, family education and other factors, some college students fail to find their own interests during their four years of college study and life, and do not have a clear understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses, which leads to the lack of self-confidence and inability to fully express themselves in the fierce job search process, and ultimately fail to find a job and are forced to become "slow employment" group. Slow employment" group (Liu, 2019).

3. Method and Study

See Figure 1

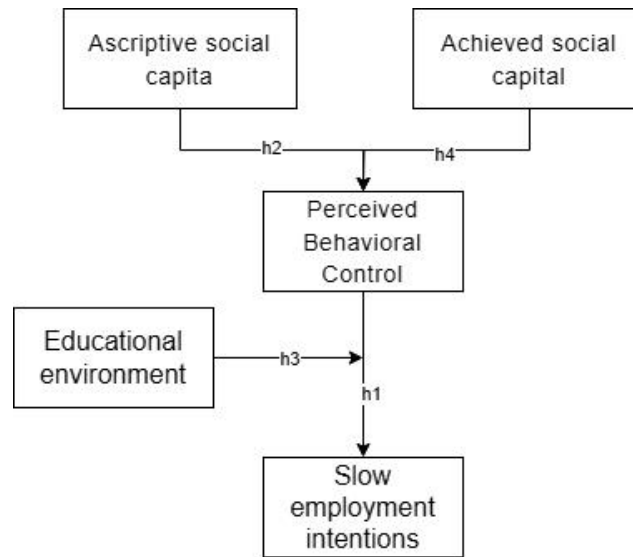


Figure 1. Research Model

3.1 Formulation of Hypotheses

h1: Individuals' Perceived Behavior Control (PBC) has an impact on slow employment

Perceived Behavior Control (PBC) is incorporated into the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) to predict/explain behaviors that are not entirely under the control of an individual's will. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, PBC is determined by beliefs about factors that may facilitate or inhibit the performance of successful behaviors (Conner & Armitage, 1998). One study based on the Theory of Planned Behavior found that attitudes, subjective norms, and internship experiences all contribute to tourism. There is a significant positive effect on professional students' willingness to work in the hospitality industry, with attitudes being the most significant; there is no significant correlation between perceived behavioral control and tourism professional students' willingness to work in the hospitality industry (Li & Sun, 2015).

h2: ascriptive social capital has an effect on the perceived control of individual behaviors

Previous studies have quantified indicators of ancestral social capital. Wang (2006) defines the definition of the endowed social capital as the capital inherited or acquired through inheritance, which mainly refers to the resources provided by parents, relatives or social relationship networks. Previous studies have shown that prior social capital has a significant positive effect on the salary level, employment unit, employment prospect and employment satisfaction of secondary school students (Chen & Lai, 2020).

h3: The Educational Environment has a positive moderating effect on the perceived control of individual behavior and the willingness to slow down employment.

The educational environment can enhance students' autonomy and self-efficacy by providing resources, support, and opportunities, thus improving their behavioral control (Research on the innovative path to cope with the phenomenon of "slow employment" of college students in the context of the new era,

2021). A positive and healthy educational environment can help students better understand their career interests and goals, reduce uncertainty and anxiety after graduation, and thus decrease the willingness to be slow to find employment (Wang & Chen, 2021). The educational environment should support students' personalized development, provide diversified choices and practice opportunities, and help students make career choices based on their interests and abilities, thus reducing the phenomenon of slow employment (Research on the innovative path to cope with the phenomenon of "slow employment" of college students in the context of the new era, 2021).

h4: Achieved Social Capital (ASC) has an effect on perceived control of individual behavior

Zhao and Wang (2017) argued that the better quality social capital one has, the higher the college students' job requirements and employment expectations are, the higher the degree of employment confidence is, and the greater the awareness of good use of social capital in the employment process is. Yan and Mao (2008) take the number of students' participation in clubs and the breadth of their personal interactions as the observational indicators of a posteriori social capital. Chen and Lai, (2008) argued that both innate social capital and postcreative social capital would have an impact on the quality of employment of secondary school students, but the results showed that in terms of the degree of influence, postcreative social capital had a greater impact on the quality of employment of secondary school students. Song and Li (2014) concluded that the stock of social capital, especially the stock of post-causal social capital, of female college students is not lower than that of male college students, and the degree of their utilization of social capital is not weaker than that of male college students; however, the impact of social capital on the employment of the two sexes still reflects significant differences, and social capital plays a greater role in the employment of male students than that of female college students.

3.2 Research Methodology

In this paper, at least 400 questionnaires were posted online to investigate the effects of prior social capital, posterior social capital, educational environment, and personal behavioral control on slow employment intentions. In this, independent scale questionnaires were set up for each factor to ensure the reliability and validity of the data. Among the collected questionnaire data, 48.5% were male and 51.5% were female; 79.2% of the respondents were in first-tier cities; and 77.4% of the school.

3.3 Data Analysis

The validity analysis of this questionnaire is realized through SPSS version 25, exploratory factor analysis method to test the process, this paper uses exploratory factor analysis to test the validity of the scale, and KMO value and significance P value to illustrate the results of the validity of the scale. According to the results of exploratory factor analysis above, it can be seen that the coefficient result of KMO test is 0.761, and KMO coefficient takes the value range between 0-1, the closer to 1 indicates that the validity of the questionnaire is better. According to the significance of the spherical test it can also be seen that the significance of this test is infinitely close to 0. The original hypothesis is rejected, so the questionnaire has good validity.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO Number of Sampling Suitability Measure.	0.761
approximate chi-square (math.)	12466.781
Bartlett's test of sphericity (number of) degrees of freedom (physics)	351
significance	0.000

According to the results of the reliability analysis in Table 2, it can be seen that the overall standardized reliability coefficient on the importance of post-causal social capital is 0.872. Based on the reliability coefficients after the item deletion, it can be seen that all of them are less than the overall 0.872, so the title of the post-causal social capital dimension does not need to be modified. The overall standardized reliability coefficient is 0.872, and the value of the reliability coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, the closer to 1 the higher the reliability. The result of this analysis is 0.872, which is relatively good reliability.

Table 2. Confidence Analysis of the Importance of Post-Causal Social Capital

options (as in computer software settings)	Mean value of the scale after deletion of entries	Scaled variance after deletion of terms	Correlation of corrected entries to totals	(math.) square multiple correlation	Clone Bach Alpha after deletion of items	Stand ardiz ed alpha
Imbalance between supply and demand in the job market and fierce competition for jobs	20.06	13.973	0.694	0.538	0.847	
Socio-economic transition and reduced demand for jobs	20.13	13.959	0.619	0.475	0.859	
Poor employment situation	19.92	14.065	0.687	0.548	0.849	0.872
Incomplete types of occupations recognized	20.36	13.507	0.670	0.488	0.851	
Low exposure to diverse career information and resources	20.34	13.691	0.759	0.618	0.837	
Low level of intimacy with people in their social network	20.51	12.619	0.652	0.572	0.859	

According to the results of the reliability analysis in Table 3, it can be seen that the overall standardized reliability coefficient α is 0.85 on the reliability analysis of the importance of prior social capital, and it can be seen that all of the reliability coefficients according to the item deletion are less than the overall 0.85, so the title of the content dimension of the remuneration system does not need to be adjusted. According to the overall standardized reliability coefficient of 0.85, the reliability is relatively good.

Table 3. Confidence Analysis of the Importance of Prioritized Social Capital

	Mean	Scaled	Correlation	(math.)	Clone	
options (as in	value of	variance	of corrected	square	Bach	
computer	the scale	after	entries to	multiple	Alpha	Standardized alpha
software	after	deletion	totals	correlation	after	
settings)	deletion	of terms			deletion	
	of entries				of items	
A well-off						
family that						
provides						
material						
security for	17.19	17.931	0.613	0.734	0.827	
slow						
employment						
without						
financial						
pressure						
Parents are						
more inclusive	17.25	18.379	0.579	0.672	0.833	0.85
of employment						
choices						
Lack of						
employment	17.57	17.343	0.549	0.493	0.840	
guidance in the						
family						
Low level of						
parental	17.91	16.199	0.758	0.665	0.798	
education						
Low						
occupational	18.06	17.075	0.591	0.566	0.831	

status of					
parents					
Low annual per					
capita	17.89	15.495	0.715	0.588	0.806
household					
income					

According to the results of the reliability analysis on Table 4, it can be seen that the overall standardized reliability coefficient α is 0.843 on the reliability analysis of the degree of importance of the social capital of the predisposition, and according to the reliability coefficient of the item deletion, it can be seen that they are all less than the overall 0.843, so the title of the content dimension of the remuneration system does not need to be adjusted. According to the overall standardized reliability coefficient of 0.843, the reliability is relatively good.

Table 4. Reliability Analysis of the Importance of the Educational Environment

options (as in computer software settings)	Mean value of the scale after deletion of entries	Scaled variance after deletion of terms	Correlation of corrected entries to totals	(math.) square multiple correlation	Clone Bach Alpha after deletion of items	Standardized alpha
Insufficient investment in teaching and insufficient integration of teaching resources	19.19	12.560	0.628	0.499	0.818	0.843
Mismatch between talent training and social needs	18.85	13.519	0.549	0.371	0.832	
Insufficiently comprehensive career guidance	19.13	11.500	0.735	0.685	0.795	

programs					
There is a					
discrepancy					
between school					
recruiting	18.96	13.653	0.520	0.316	0.837
companies and					
students'					
employment					
expectations					
Inadequate					
dissemination of					
employment	19.30	11.445	0.807	0.757	0.780
policies and					
information on					
employment					
Lack of					
employment	19.28	12.799	0.519	0.381	0.841
climate					

According to Table 5, it can be seen that the overall standardized reliability coefficient α is 0.943 on the reliability analysis of the importance of prior social capital, and according to the reliability coefficient after the item deletion, it can be seen that all of them are less than the overall 0.943, so the title of the content dimension of the remuneration system does not need to be adjusted. According to the overall standardized reliability coefficient of 0.943, the reliability is relatively good.

Table 5. Individual Behavioral Perceived Control Importance Reliability Analysis

options (as in computer software settings)	Mean value of the scale after deletion of entries	Scaled variance after deletion of terms	Correlation of corrected entries to totals	(math.) square multiple correlation	Clone Bach Alpha after deletion of items	Standardized alpha
Planning to start a business, go to graduate school,	32.23	26.010	0.650	0.581	0.941	0.943

or something else					
Have a					
preference for specific positions	32.26	26.370	0.686	0.596	0.937
Unclear personal career planning					
paths and lack of employment goals	32.15	26.871	0.769	0.740	0.933
Poor personal orientation and employment difficulties	32.21	26.189	0.810	0.771	0.930
Higher career expectations and reluctance to settle	32.21	26.680	0.804	0.769	0.931
Difficulty in translating the theoretical knowledge acquired into practice	32.42	25.170	0.781	0.686	0.932
Inadequate employability and unpreparedness for employment	32.30	25.970	0.821	0.835	0.929
Low reasonableness of job expectations and lack of rational knowledge of the employment situation	32.17	26.657	0.855	0.867	0.929

Lack of confidence to make independent career choices	32.32	26.242	0.831	0.860	0.929
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In this paper, the data will be analyzed using the process (Figure 1) and the following data will be obtained

Correlation analysis is the longest term analysis method in correlation studies, this time SPSS version 25 correlation analysis was used.

Table 6. Correlation Analysis between Individual Perceived Behavioral Control and Slow Employment Intentions

variant	relevance	Slow employment intentions	Personal Perceived Behavioral Control
Slow employment intentions	Pearson Correlation	1	
Personal Perceived Behavioral Control	Pearson Correlation	.312	1

.At the 0.01 level (two-tailed), the correlation is significant.

Table 7. Correlation Analysis of Social Capital on Individual Perceived Behavioral Control

variant	relevance	Individual Score Mean	Impact	Mean Impact Score	Social Score	Mean Impact Score	Family
Personal Behavioral Control	Perceived	Pearson Correlation	1				
a posteriori capital	social	Pearson Correlation	.712	1		.629	
Endowed social capital		Pearson Correlation	.586	.629		1	

. At the 0.01 level (two-tailed), the correlation is significant.

According to Table 6, the Pearson correlation between slow employment intentions and personal perceived behavioral control is 0.312. The correlation significance level is 0.01 (two-tailed), indicating a positive correlation between slow employment intentions and personal perceived behavioral control.

According to Table 7, there is a strong positive correlation between individual perceived behavioral

control and posterior social capital, with a correlation coefficient of 0.712. This indicates that individuals who have a higher degree of perceived control over their own behavior also tend to have a higher degree of posterior social capital. There is also a positive but relatively weak correlation between perceived behavioral control and prior social capital, with a correlation coefficient of 0.586. This suggests that individuals who have a high degree of perceived control over their own behavior also tend to have some degree of prior social capital.

Table 8. Regression Analysis of Output M

variant	B	SE	Beta	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
(Constant)	2.166	0.224		9.658	0	-3.528	-2.966
Personal Behavioral Perception Control	0.371	0.055	0.312	6.743	0	0.782	1.034

Table 9. Analysis of Regression Results for Output Y

variant	Coeff	Se	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
constant	2.7542	0.4346	7.3232	0	2.4212	6.4366
X	3.8856	0.1254	-1.421	0.0372	-0.3521	0.3251
M	0.3214	0.1254	-1.3211	0.0494	-0.4112	0.0532
K	0.3532	0.0582	3.5718	0.1172	0.1523	0.4624
Int_1	0.1742	0.0321	1.7224	0.0387	-0.0187	0.4385

Where X is the independent variable, indicating the perceived control of individual behavior, M is the mediator variable, indicating the educational environment, K is the moderator variable 1, indicating the moderation of antecedent social capital, J is the moderator variable 2, indicating the moderation of a posteriori social capital, and Y is the dependent variable indicating the subject's willingness to slow down employment.

Int_1: X (perceived control of individual behavior) x K (educational environment)

This study was analyzed by multiple linear regression using SPSS version 25 and the following results were obtained:

As can be seen from the results of Table 8, there is a very significant positive effect between the independent variable and the mediator variable ($P < 0.001$), combined with Table 9, it can be seen that the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable is significant ($P > 0.05$), and the mediator variable does not have a significant relationship with the dependent variable ($P > 0.05$), and after adjusting the mediator variable, there is a significant ($P < 0.05$) effect on the individual's perceived behavioral control is significant ($P < 0.05$), the introduction of moderating variables makes the significant degree of the effect of personal behavioral perceived control on slow employment intentions

change, which may mean that a specific social capital environment can adjust the degree of the effect of personal behavioral perceived control on employment perceptions, the coefficients of the interaction terms Int_1 ($X \times K$) and Int_2 ($X \times J$) are respectively 0.1742 and 0.1476, and their t-values are 1.7224 and 2.2458, respectively, with p-values less than 0.05, indicating that these two interaction terms have a significant effect on slow employment intentions. The coefficient of the mediator variable M (educational environment) is 0.3214, with a p-value of 0.0494, indicating that the educational environment has a significant effect on the willingness to be employed slowly, i.e., the level of education may affect the individual's attitudes and perceptions towards employment.

3.4 Research and Analysis

Based on the results of the above data analysis, the validation of the hypotheses of this paper can be obtained, as shown in Figure 2.

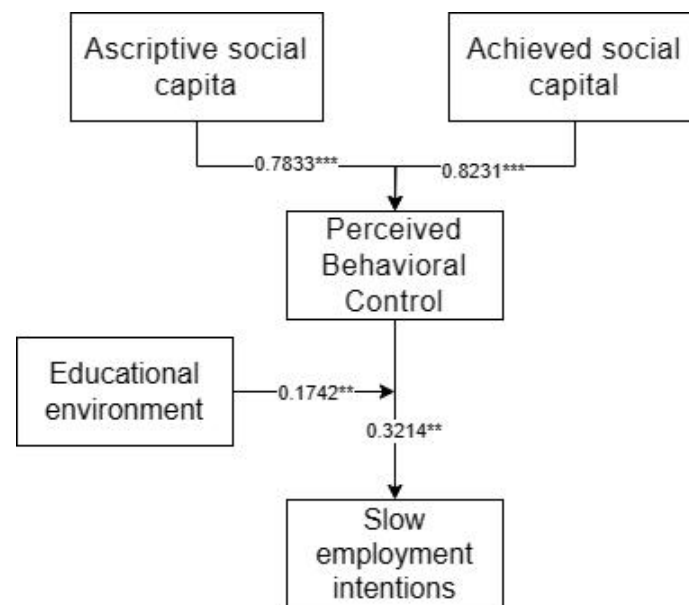


Figure 2. Path Model of Structural Equations

4. Conclusion

Through our research, we find that prior social capital, such as family background and social network, has a significant impact on individuals' employment choices and employment speed. Individuals with higher innate social capital tend to have faster access to employment information and opportunities, thus reducing the likelihood of slow employment. The impact of post-dispositional social capital, including educational attainment, work experience and vocational skills, on the willingness to be slow to find employment should not be overlooked. Good educational background and practical experience can effectively enhance the employment competitiveness of individuals and reduce their risk of slow employment. Educational environment plays a decisive role in the cultivation of individual's employment concept and employment ability. A high-quality educational environment can provide

students with more practical opportunities and career planning guidance, which can help reduce the phenomenon of slow employment after graduation. Individuals' behavioral control ability, such as time management, goal setting and self-motivation, plays a positive role in alleviating the slow employment phenomenon. Individuals with good behavioral control skills can plan their career development paths more effectively, reducing slow employment caused by confusion and waiting.

This study has conducted an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of "slow employment" among college graduates, analyzed its causes, characteristics and impact on individuals and society, and put forward corresponding strategies to solve the problem. However, in view of the continuous changes in the social and economic environment and the continuous development of the higher education system, there are still many aspects of future research on the phenomenon of "slow employment" that deserve further exploration and improvement. First of all, future research can further deepen the understanding of the phenomenon of "slow employment", and explore the differences and peculiarities of the phenomenon of "slow employment" under different socio-cultural backgrounds, levels of economic development and educational systems through cross-regional and interdisciplinary comparative studies. In addition, the research content can be expanded by combining "slow employment" with other social phenomena, such as "entrepreneurial tide" and "study abroad fever", and analyzing the interaction and influence between them. Secondly, more advanced statistical analysis techniques, such as structural equation modeling and multilevel linear modeling, can be used in the research methodology to more accurately reveal the internal mechanism and influencing factors of the phenomenon of "slow employment". Meanwhile, qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews and case studies, can be combined to enrich and improve the understanding of the phenomenon of "slow employment". Finally, future research should also pay attention to the impact of long-term changes in social mentality and values on the phenomenon of "slow employment". With the development of society and the change of values of the young generation, "slow employment" may become a new social trend. Therefore, there is a need for long-term observation and research on this phenomenon in order to better understand and adapt to this change.

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