

The Employment Pressure Of College Students Based On Structural Equation Model and The Return To Start Their Own Businesses Factor Analysis —— Take Guangxi universities as an example

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Abstract: This paper explores the impact mechanism of employment pressure and college students' return to their hometowns for entrepreneurship and employment in Guangxi, based on two major social hotspots. The study uses an employment pressure scale to conduct a questionnaire survey among college students in Guangxi, and constructs a structural equation model (SEM) to deeply analyze the interaction relationships between various influencing factors and their impact mechanisms on returning to start businesses or find employment. The findings show that the overall quality of college students is positively correlated with their willingness to return and start businesses; those with higher overall quality can better identify opportunities in rural areas and possess entrepreneurial capabilities. Employment expectations are negatively correlated with the willingness to return and find employment; high employment expectations make college students more inclined to seek urban jobs. Support for career acquisition is negatively correlated with both the willingness to return and start businesses or find employment, indicating that the current career support system has not effectively guided talent flow to rural areas. These findings have significant reference value for policy formulation, educational guidance, and personal career planning of college students.

Keywords: Structural Equation model; Employment pressure; Entrepreneurship; Employment

1、Introduction

As globalization deepens and China's economy rapidly develops, higher education has become increasingly widespread, with the number of college students growing rapidly year by year: In 2001, there were 1.14 million graduates from universities nationwide^[1], which surged to 7.49 million in 2015^[2], and reached 8.74 million in 2020, with an estimated 11.79 million in 2024. This has made the employment issue for college graduates an increasingly prominent social problem. In recent years, due to the complex and volatile economic situation both domestically and internationally, as well as the industrial restructuring brought about by technological progress, the employment pressure on college graduates has continued to increase. Against this backdrop, more and more college students are considering returning to their hometowns to start businesses or find employment. This is not only a new choice for personal career planning but also an effective way to alleviate employment pressure and promote local economic development. The phenomenon of college graduates returning to their hometowns to start businesses or find employment reflects both the current challenges in the job market and the sense of responsibility and mission of the younger generation towards their hometowns' development. They leverage the knowledge and skills acquired

during their university years, combined with the actual conditions of their hometowns, to inject new vitality into the socio-economic development of their hometowns through methods such as starting businesses and launching innovative projects. At the same time, this model of entrepreneurship and employment helps ease the employment pressure in major cities and promotes a balanced distribution of talent resources.

However, college students returning to their hometowns for entrepreneurship and employment also face numerous challenges. On one hand, they need to overcome the limitations of limited resources and an immature market in their hometowns; on the other hand, they must confront pressures and expectations from family and society. Therefore, studying the impact of employment pressure on college students returning to their hometowns for entrepreneurship and employment is crucial. It provides a theoretical basis for understanding the underlying causes and mechanisms behind this phenomenon, which in turn helps relevant departments formulate more scientifically sound policies.

This paper takes college students in Guangxi as the subjects of investigation, collecting data through questionnaires and conducting result analysis. The aim is to explore the impact mechanism of employment pressure on college students returning to their hometowns for entrepreneurship and employment. Specifically, this includes: (1) assessing the current status of employment pressure among college students in Guangxi; (2) analyzing the impact of employment pressure on returning to start businesses; (3) analyzing the impact of employment pressure on returning to find jobs; (4) proposing corresponding recommendations to provide theoretical basis for relevant departments.

2、Literature Review

Stress and psychological resilience are closely related to mental health. Research has found that among the issues affecting college students' mental health, the most direct is various pressures in the learning environment, with employment pressure being the primary one^[3]. College student employment anxiety refers to a state of tension, anxiety, inner unease, or even panic that arises when individuals face the critical moment of entering society and making career choices due to misunderstandings about the job market, vague personal career goals, or uncertainties in the external environment^[4]. This emotional experience can negatively impact the psychological state of college students, thereby affecting their job-seeking decisions and future career development.

In terms of employment pressure, Li Shengqiang (2011)^[5] found that the proportion of graduates who are more concerned about initial employment pressure is 68% lower compared to fresh graduates. In career selection and development, both fresh and past graduates need to pay attention to their career planning and salary expectations to find job opportunities that match their personal abilities and market demands^[6].

And the return of college students to their hometowns for entrepreneurship and employment also provides a good platform. "Under the influence of national macro policies, various regions have successively introduced favorable policies to promote college students' return to start businesses, and more and more policy support is being provided for college students returning home to start businesses^[7]." Young college students choosing to return to their hometowns to participate in rural revitalization not only offer them broad career development opportunities but also become a key force in effectively alleviating social employment pressure^[8].

To sum up, employment pressure is one of the important challenges faced by contemporary college students, and returning to their hometowns to start businesses or find jobs as an effective way to cope with this pressure has gradually attracted more and more attention. However, the mechanism by which factors related to employment pressure affect college students' willingness to return home for entrepreneurship or job-seeking needs further analysis and discussion.

3、Research Methods and Research Hypotheses

1.1 Questionnaire Design and Distribution

This study adopted the questionnaire survey method for data collection, referencing Pan Lili and Li Baozhu's^[9] research on the design of the employment pressure scale. The subjects of this survey were college students from local universities in Guangxi, using the Wenjuanxing platform for the survey. In terms of content, we evaluated employment pressure from five dimensions: overall quality, social demand, employment expectations, support for career acquisition, and self-positioning, using a five-point Likert scale for scoring, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Employment pressure scale

Dimension	Title Of The Item
Sitting Up Exercise	Q1 Lack of energy to improve management ability such as student leaders
	Q2 Poor academic performance
	Q3 Professional practice skills are not high
	Q4. I seldom participate in professional social practice or academic activities during college
	Q5. I have no special skills
	Q6. No or few honors and awards received
	Q7. I didn't start my career planning from the lower grades
	Q8. The overall ability is weak and the competitiveness is lacking
Social Needs	D1 The number of graduates is large and the positions are limited
	D2 The novel coronavirus epidemic has exacerbated the grim employment situation of college students
	D3 Take the postgraduate entrance exam or get a job, or do both
	D4 Job position has high requirements for the quality of professionals in this major
	D5 Various kinds of discrimination in recruitment (such as gender discrimination, educational background discrimination, school level discrimination, etc.)
	D6 Bachelor's degree lacks competitiveness
Employment Expectations	E1 Some units have high recruitment requirements and fierce competition
	E2 Worried that the job they found had no prospects and opportunities I was worried about the difficulty of the work and I couldn't do it
	E4 worried about the low economic income and poor welfare benefits of working
	E5 looks forward to working in a well-known and profitable unit
	E6 I would like to stay in a big city or economically developed area to work
	E7 Be prepared to take various recruitment exams as you look for a job
Career Support	S1 The cost of finding a job is heavy (e.g., travel, communication, information costs, etc.)
	S2 The family conditions are average and there are no social connections
	S3 Parents and family members have too much expectation of themselves
	S4 Parents disagree with their own employment opinions
	My classmates around S5 found jobs before me

Self-positioning	O1 Don't know what kind of work you like
	O2 doesn't know what kind of work he's suited for
	O3. I don't know what kind of work my major is suitable for
	O4 Don't like their major, but can't change it

1.2 Composition Of The Subjects

The questionnaire was distributed in June 2024 by means of "snowball" sampling. The universities that received the questionnaire were mainly local universities in Guangxi, and 280 questionnaires were obtained.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

Based on the analysis of factors affecting college students' employment pressure in Guangxi and their impact on returning to hometown for entrepreneurship and employment, combined with theory and practice, this paper proposes theoretical hypotheses about the factors influencing college students' employment pressure on their willingness to return to hometown for entrepreneurship and employment. It constructs a structural equation model and conducts fit tests to verify the direct interaction mechanism between employment pressure and the factors influencing the willingness to return to hometown for entrepreneurship and employment, followed by path analysis and impact analysis.

Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: College students' comprehensive quality is positively correlated with their willingness to return to their hometowns to start businesses;

H2: College students' comprehensive quality is positively correlated with their willingness to return to work;

H3: College students' employment expectation is negatively correlated with their willingness to return to their hometowns to start businesses;

H4: College students' employment expectation is negatively correlated with their willingness to return to work;

H5: College students' career support is negatively correlated with their willingness to return to their hometowns to start businesses;

H6: College students' career support is negatively correlated with their willingness to return to work;

H7: College students' self-positioning is positively correlated with their willingness to return to their hometowns to start businesses;

H8: There is a negative correlation between college students' self-positioning and their willingness to return to work.

4、Empirical Analysis

1.1 .Descriptive Statistical Analysis

In this survey questionnaire, 66.1% of the respondents are female, and 33.9% are male; regarding their place of residence, 51.3% of the respondents come from rural areas, while 48.7% come from urban areas; concerning the willingness to return home for entrepreneurship, 31.3% of the respondents have the intention to start a business back home, whereas 68.7% do not; regarding employment opportunities upon returning home, 71.3% of the respondents have the intention to seek employment back home, while 28.7% do not.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics

Variable Name	Variable Declaration	Least Value	Crest Value	Mean	Standard Error
Gender	Gender ("male" = 0; "female" = 1)	1	2	1.66	0.475
Location	location (Rural = 1, Urban = 1)	1	2	1.51	0.502
Entrepreneurship	Will to return home for business (Willingness = 0, Unwillingness = 1)	1	2	1.69	0.466
Employment	Willingness to return to work (Willingness = 0, Unwillingness = 1)	1	2	1.29	0.454
Quality	sitting up exercise (1-5)	1	5	3.11	0.85
Demand	Social needs (1-5)	2.3	4.7	3.69	0.48
Expectation	Employment expectations (1-5)	2.4	5	3.92	0.53
Support	Career support (1-5)	1.6	5	3.49	0.67
Orientation	Self-positioning (1-5)	1	5	3.27	0.86

1.2 .Credibility Analysis

The internal consistency of each dimension was analyzed by using SPSS software through the Cronbach's reliability test method. Since the Cronbach's coefficient of "social needs" dimension was <0.6, and the Cronbach's coefficient was still <0.6 after deleting items in this dimension, this study deleted this dimension, and the modified results are shown in Table 3. Therefore, the reliability of the questionnaire is qualified.

Table 3 Cronbach test

Variable	Clonebach Alpha	Number Of Terms
Sitting Up Exercise	0.890	8
Employment Expectations	0.730	7
Career Support	0.719	5
Self-positioning	0.797	4
Employment Pressure	0.909	24

1.3 .Analysis Of Validity

1.3.1.KMO and Bartlett Test

Using SPSS software to conduct the KMO and Bartlett tests, since the KMO sampling adequacy index value for the "Social Needs" dimension is <0.6 , this dimension fails the validity test. After conducting a comprehensive reliability and validity test, the "Social Needs" dimension was removed. The modified KMO > 0.6 , with a P-value <0.01 , making it suitable for factor analysis. Therefore, we further conducted confirmatory factor analysis using the Amos plugin.

Table 4 KMO and Bartlett test

KMO Sample Appropriateness Measure.		0.829
Bartlett's Test Of Sphericity	Approximate chi-square	1005.690
	Free degree	276
	Conspicuousness	0.000

1.3.2.Confirmatory Factor Analysis

1.3.2.1.CFA Model Fit Test

According to the model results in Table 5, CMIN/DF (chi-square degree of freedom ratio) =1.984, which is within the excellent range; RMSEA (root mean square error) =0.093, IFI=0.717, TLI=0.677, and CFI=0.708. The results of this analysis show that the CFA model for employment pressure has a certain degree of fit.

Table 5 CFA fit model test

Metric	Actual Indicators	Reference Standard
CMIN/DF	1.984	1-3 is excellent, 3-5 is good
RMSEA	0.093	<0.05 is excellent, <0.1 is good
IFI	0.717	>0.9 is excellent, >0.8 is good
TLI	0.677	>0.9 is excellent, >0.8 is good
CFI	0.708	>0.9 is excellent, >0.8 is good

When the CFA model of the employment pressure scale has a certain degree of fit, further tests will be conducted on the convergent validity (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) of each dimension of the scale. According to relevant literature, an AVE value between 0.36 and 0.5 is considered acceptable^[10], with a minimum CR requirement of 0.7, indicating good convergent validity and composite reliability.

According to the analysis results in Table 6, the AVE of comprehensive quality and self-positioning reached 0.36 in this scale validity test, and the CR value of all dimensions reached 0.7. In general, it has a certain convergent validity and composite reliability.

Table 6 Convergence validity and composite reliability test of each dimension of employment pressure scale

Convergence Validity and Composite Reliability Of Each Dimension Of Employment Pressure Scale Were Tested				
Path Relationship	Estimate	AVE	CR	P

ZH8	<---	Comprehensive quality dimension	0.819			
ZH7	<---	Comprehensive quality dimension	0.666			***
ZH6	<---	Comprehensive quality dimension	0.664			***
ZH5	<---	Comprehensive quality dimension	0.637			***
ZH4	<---	Comprehensive quality dimension	0.801	0.512	0.892	***
ZH3	<---	Comprehensive quality dimension	0.803			***
ZH2	<---	Comprehensive quality dimension	0.566			***
ZH1	<---	Comprehensive quality dimension	0.724			***
JY7	<---	Employment expectations dimension	0.377			
JY6	<---	Employment expectations dimension	0.41			0.005
JY5	<---	Employment expectations dimension	0.569			0.001
JY4	<---	Employment expectations dimension	0.734	0.308	0.748	***
JY3	<---	Employment expectations dimension	0.496			0.002
JY2	<---	Employment expectations dimension	0.678			***
JY1	<---	Employment expectations dimension	0.524			0.002
ZY5	<---	Career support dimension	0.52			
ZY4	<---	Career support dimension	0.711			***
ZY3	<---	Career support dimension	0.729	0.343	0.714	***
ZY2	<---	Career support dimension	0.449			***
ZY1	<---	Career support dimension	0.453			***
ZW4	<---	Self-positioning dimension	0.454			
ZW3	<---	Self-positioning dimension	0.699			***
ZW2	<---	Self-positioning dimension	0.869	0.535	0.814	***
ZW1	<---	Self-positioning dimension	0.831			***

1.4 .Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

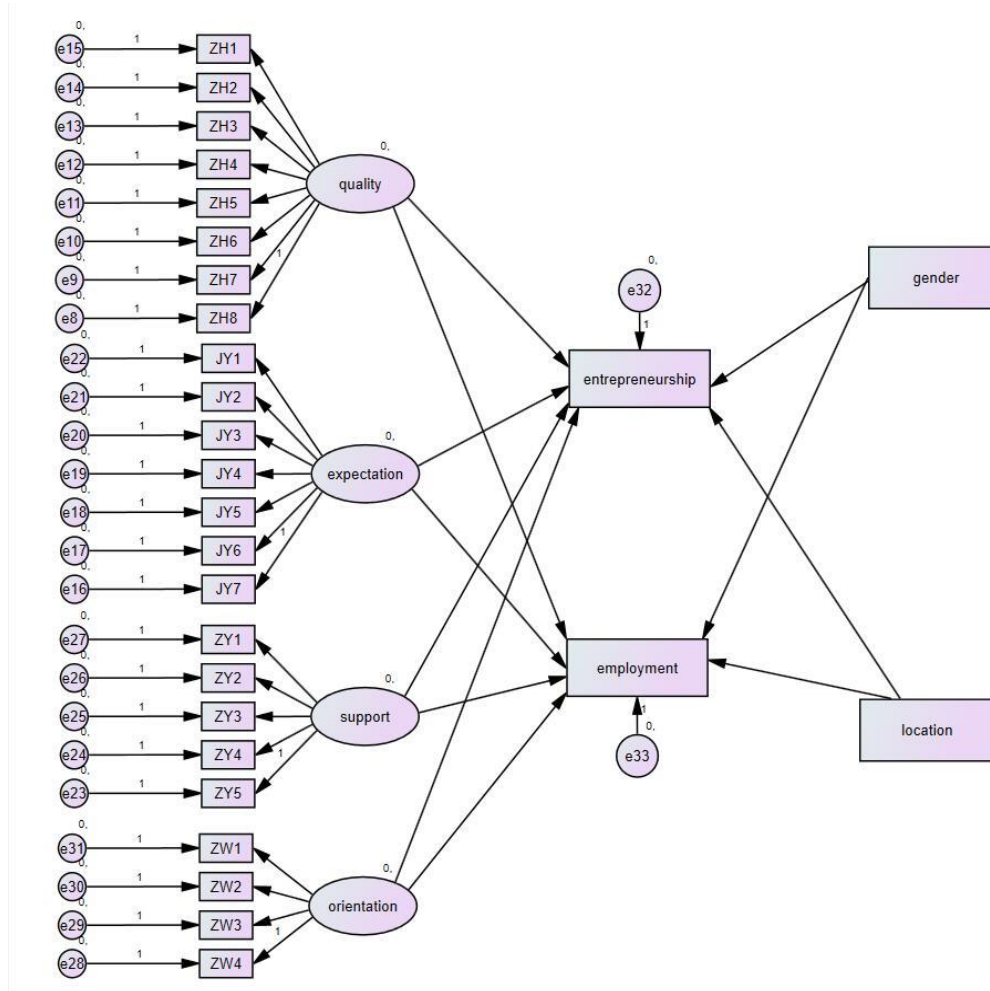
1.4.1.Model Construction and Model Fitting

Most of the fitting parameters of the model meet the requirements, indicating that the model fitting meets the standard. Therefore, Amos software is used to estimate the parameters using maximum likelihood estimation method, and the structural equation model is obtained as shown in the following chart.

Table 7 Results of hypothesis testing of path relationship in SEM model with influencing factors

The Results Of The SEM Model Path Relationship Hypothesis Test Are Influenced By The Factors						
Path Relationship			Estimate	AVE	CR	P
Will to return home for business	<---	Comprehensive Quality Dimension	0.185	0.047	<u>2.112</u>	0.035
Willingness to return to work	<---	Comprehensive Quality Dimension	0.096	0.045	1.179	0.238
Will to return home for business	<---	Employment Expectations Dimension	0.005	0.137	0.051	0.959
Willingness to return to work	<---	Employment Expectations Dimension	0.26	0.166	2.353	0.019
Will to return home for business	<---	Career Support Dimension	-0.487	0.129	-3.888	***
Willingness to return to work	<---	Career Support Dimension	-0.546	0.135	-4.242	***
Will to return home for business	<---	Self-positioning Dimension	0.079	0.082	0.874	0.382
Willingness to return to work	<---	Self-positioning Dimension	0.127	0.08	1.458	0.145
Will to return home for business	<---	Sex	0.063	0.086	0.758	0.448
Willingness to return to work	<---	Sex	-0.01	0.082	-0.124	0.901
Will to return home for business	<---	Location	-0.084	0.081	-1.023	0.307
Willingness to return to work	<---	Location	-0.127	0.077	-1.644	0.1

Figure 1 Structural equation model



1.4.2. Structural Equation Model Path Analysis

The path parameter estimation results of the model are shown in Table 7. There is a positive correlation between college students' comprehensive qualities and their willingness to return home for entrepreneurship; a negative correlation between college students' employment expectations and their willingness to return home for employment; a negative correlation between college students' support in obtaining careers and their willingness to return home for entrepreneurship; and a negative correlation between college students' support in obtaining careers and their willingness to return home for employment. H1, H4, H5, and H6 have been verified.

This indicates that college students exhibit a complex relationship between career choice and the willingness to return home. The higher the overall quality of college students, the stronger their desire to start businesses in rural areas. This may be because individuals with high comprehensive qualities are more likely to identify potential development opportunities and challenges in rural areas, and they are better equipped to face these entrepreneurial challenges. Conversely, the higher their employment expectations, the lower their willingness to return for work, reflecting concerns about the employment environment and benefits in rural areas. At the same time, while career support helps college students establish themselves in cities, it also diminishes their willingness to start businesses or find jobs back home, suggesting that the current career support system has not effectively guided talent to flow back to rural areas. The mechanisms for attracting and retaining rural talent need further improvement.

5、 Conclusion and Suggestions

The research findings indicate that the overall quality of college students is positively correlated with their willingness to return home for entrepreneurship. This suggests that college students with higher comprehensive qualities are more inclined to start businesses in their hometowns, where they can better seize opportunities for rural entrepreneurship and promote rural development. However, there is a negative correlation between college students' employment expectations and their willingness to return home for work, reflecting concerns about the employment environment and benefits in rural areas. High employment expectations make them more likely to stay in cities in search of better job opportunities. Additionally, support for career advancement among college students is negatively correlated with both their willingness to return home for entrepreneurship and employment. While such support helps college students establish themselves in urban areas, it also reduces their likelihood of returning home for entrepreneurship or employment. This indicates that the current system of career support for college students falls short in guiding talent to flow back to rural areas, failing to effectively inspire enthusiasm among college students to return home. In response, the following suggestions are proposed:

First, to strengthen support for rural entrepreneurship, the government should introduce more preferential policies, such as providing start-up subsidies and tax breaks, to reduce the risk of college students returning to their hometowns to start businesses. At the same time, it should build platforms for entrepreneurship and provide services such as technical guidance and market information.

Second, improve the rural employment environment, improve the rural employment treatment, improve infrastructure and public services, so that college students can enjoy a quality of life comparable to that in cities in rural areas, and enhance the attractiveness of rural employment.

Third, adjust employment expectations. Universities should help students establish reasonable employment expectations in career guidance, guiding them to recognize the potential and value of returning home for entrepreneurship and employment. At the same time, provide necessary entrepreneurial guidance and employment services to assist them in better planning their careers. "University innovation and entrepreneurship education should leverage institutional influence, propose corresponding educational strategies, and promote changes in innovation and entrepreneurship education aimed at facilitating the social development of college students^[11]."

Fourth, enhance the promotion of hometown development. Local governments and communities should strengthen the promotion of their hometowns, showcasing advantages in economy, culture, and environment. This will increase college students' sense of identity and belonging to their hometowns, thereby increasing their likelihood of choosing to return for entrepreneurship or employment. It will also change the stereotypical views of rural areas among college students and ignite their enthusiasm for returning home to start businesses or find jobs.

Data availability statement: This project strictly complies with the policy of COPE, and the statistical survey has obtained the right to know of the participants.

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