

Analysis on the Impact of Family Capital on Individual Employment Choices in China

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Abstract: In 2023, over 11.58 million college students graduated in China, and structural unemployment caused by the deviation of job seekers' employment expectations from actual positions today has become a major employment problem. Promoting college students to start at the grassroots level for their employment can not only reduce the employment pressure but also alleviate the talent shortage problem at the grassroots level. Most of the existing studies are problem-oriented studies, and few of them incorporate the perspective of the family capital field. Therefore, this study summarizes the relationship between family capital ownership and participation in grassroots employment by combining the studies on family capital and grassroots employment. It is found that college students with a large amount of family capital are more reluctant to find grassroots employment. From the perspective of family capital, this paper analyzes the reasons why some college students are reluctant to find grassroots employment and puts forward some suggestions to help improve the motivation and ability of college students in grassroots employment.

Keywords: grassroots employment, family capital, employment intentions

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the main dilemma of Chinese college students' employment is the large deviation between employment expectations and actual employment positions. At the same time, many colleges and universities have a disconnection between professional training and actual working conditions. The scale of China's secondary industry is large, but it is difficult to meet the current employment needs of these college students. Meanwhile, the tertiary industry can not yet provide sufficient employment capacity, therefore, the mismatch between the graduates and the industrial structure has led to the result that the supply of the labor market exceeds the demand. As a result, college graduates wind up underemployed [1], causing structural unemployment. While many grassroots organizations are experiencing a "labor shortage", college students are still facing difficulties in finding employment, and the shortage of grassroots talents resulting from this phenomenon is an important factor in the persistence of poverty and uneven development at the local level. Therefore, guiding university students to seek employment at the grassroots level is a very important step in alleviating the employment pressure on university students.

However, most of the existing studies start from the current situation and problems of employment, and there are few cross-sectional studies combining other fields. Based on the perspective of family capital, this paper studies the influence of family capital on college students in their employment

choices. From the theoretical level, this paper can improve the principle analysis of college students' employment intention. From the practical point of view, by studying the law of college students' employment intention, college students can be guided to grassroots employment, the waste of talents can be avoided, the social mobility of class can be promoted, and the fair development of society can be enhanced [2].

2. The Impact of Family Capital on Individual Employment

The term family capital is taken from Bourdieu's theory of social capital. In *The Forms of Capital*, Bourdieu categorizes capital into three parts, namely economic capital, social capital, and cultural capital.

Economic capital consists of direct and indirect transfers, with direct transfers referring to children directly inheriting their parents' wealth to improve their own social status, and profile transfers referring to families indirectly changing their children's social status through education, training, etc.

Cultural capital is an intrinsic manifestation of cultural resources with uniqueness and is the sum of knowledge, skills, temperament, and cultural background possessed by all classes and individuals in society.

Social capital is a collection of actual or potential resources acquired through the possession of "institutionalized networks". It is owned by individuals and manifests itself as the basic property of socially structured resources, mainly in the form of expectations of obligations, information networks, norms, social organizations, and so on.

2.1. The Impact of Family Economic Capital on Employment

In the study of family economic capital on students' employment intention, Ma Xiaoting [3] conducted a questionnaire survey on graduates, and the overall family monthly income and per capita monthly income were used as indicators of family economic capital, which led to the conclusion that family economic capital affects graduates' expected salaries and employment purposes. The more superior the family capital is, the more educational resources can be enjoyed by the children raised in this family. As a result, these children's expected salaries and employment standards are raised. Peng Xuemei came up with similar research conclusions [3]: the larger the family's stock of economic capital, the more the parents will intervene in their children's job search and the more they are reluctant for their children to go to work in poor areas.

Meanwhile, Han Luven's research also shows that family economic capital affects the job search process and job search psychology and may influence the outcome of job search [4]. In the job search process, families with more economic capital consider less about the financial costs such as transportation and accommodation costs. Moreover, job seekers with a large amount of family economic capital will have a better mindset during the job search process. In addition, the study also mentioned that influencing the employer's choice through money may also be an indication of the instrumental role of economic capital in employment.

2.2. The Impact of Family Cultural Capital on Employment

Established studies have shown that the larger the amount of the family cultural capital is, the better the educational opportunities will be for the children. In other words, there is a significant effect of parental literacy on children's access to school [5]. The more the family capital is, the more intervention the family will have in their children's career choices [5].

In Huang Yedi's study [6], a sample survey was conducted on the family cultural capital and the employment intention of undergraduate freshmen from three different agricultural colleges, and a significant negative correlation between family cultural capital and rural employment intention was

obtained, i.e., the higher the level of the parent's education and occupation, the lower the willingness of the college students to go to rural areas for employment. In Zhang Yan's study, she quantitatively analyzed family cultural capital and college students' willingness to work in rural areas by using the structural equation model (SEM), and the results showed that the more the family cultural capital, the weaker the children's willingness to work in rural areas.

On the other hand, Yan Jiali's study shows a different result [7], which indicates that family cultural capital has a facilitating influence on college students' grassroots employment. He attributed the influence of family cultural capital to two main aspects, namely economic needs and value needs. Choosing grassroots employment to realize the value needs shows that grassroots employment has become an important way to realize personal values. According to Maslow's theory of hierarchical needs, after the family satisfies the individual's survival conditions, the individual will be more concerned about the future of the career and the fulfillment of his or her own value in the choice of career.

In families that lack cultural capital, job searching tends to be more impacted by the poverty of the family [8]. On the one side, parents' lack of knowledge about the specifics of employment may lead them to have unrealistic expectations, relatively too high or too low, of their children in terms of their employment, and children are often desperate for a "better" job to prove themselves or to give back to the family. On the other side, the choice of better companies or the blind pursuit of staffing of public institutions also limits the concept of career choice of college students and aggravates the phenomenon of structural unemployment.

2.3. The Impact of Family Social Capital on Employment

Whether social capital has an impact on the job search and employment of college students is somewhat controversial in both Chinese and global academic circles. In developed countries where the economy is highly developed and more emphasis is placed on individualism and formal rules, and in regions where the market economy is less developed, such as the "hierarchical order", many studies have shown that social capital has an impact on job search and employment and individual career choices of college students.

Some studies have shown that social capital can compensate for the asymmetry of employment information of college graduates and help college graduates obtain employment opportunities [9]. At the same time, it helps to make up for the information asymmetry between employers and college graduates, which can save the cost of understanding the employer's situation from the job seekers and make it easier for the employers to understand the specific personal information and personal ability of the job seekers. In the study, it was found that social capital has less influence on the income level of college students [9], which may be caused by the relative privacy of the questionnaire content in the survey.

There are three main social capital influences on college students' reluctance to choose grassroots employment [10], and all of them are related to cognitive biases. First, there are misunderstandings of grassroots work by the students themselves or their relatives, who think grassroots employment is a failure; second, students only regard grassroots work as a springboard and do not have a good attitude and sense of responsibility; third, grassroots work is usually considered to be complicated with limited career prospects.

The social capital needed for job hunting can be categorized into public employment capital and non-public employment capital [11]. Therefore, it is important for college students to strengthen their ability to utilize social capital, for instance, they should actively maintain the social capital based on blood and kinship and broaden the quality of their interpersonal network. At present, there is a lack of awareness and ability of college students to utilize social capital to find jobs, especially the attention to social capital, and the development and utilization of social capital should be strengthened.

In terms of public policy, it is urgent for government departments and colleges and universities at all levels to improve and broaden the information and ways of job-seeking. To better connect with grassroots employment, there is a need to improve the fairness of job-seeking, promote the employment of college students, and complete a more benign employment ecosystem.

3. Recommendations

First of all, college students should be guided to participate in grassroots employment, and more education and internship experiences should be adopted to break down misunderstandings and inherent concepts of grassroots employment among college students. Moreover, college students should be encouraged to combine their personal development with collective development. Students should be guided to sort out their correct outlook on life, values, and employment. This will make college students willing to participate in grassroots employment and enhance their awareness of grassroots employment.

Secondly, the capacity of university students in grassroots employment should be developed, and universities should carry out more general and competence training and more cognitive internship programs to promote the participation of university students in internships and studies related to grassroots work. The training should also be tailored to the individual characteristics revealed during the learning process.

Once again, the channels for the employment of university students in grassroots employment programs should be opened up and their treatment and standard of living should be improved. Not only should the spiritual needs of students working at the grassroots level be met, but the material needs of students working at the grassroots level should also be ensured. By increasing employment opportunities and reducing employment costs, special programs for grassroots employment should be strengthened, targeted training should be provided, employment should be recommended, job-seeking subsidies should be given to college students who lack family capital, and more economic security should be provided.

4. Conclusion

This paper investigates the effects of family economic capital, family cultural capital, and family social capital on college students' employment choices. Results show that college students with more family capital have more resources for job hunting and higher job expectations, and they prefer non-grassroots employment and higher-paying jobs instead of working at the grassroots level. This, for one thing, makes it more difficult for students to find jobs and aggravates the phenomenon of structural unemployment, and for another, it completes the inter-generational transfer of capital, thus aggravating class solidification and regional differences.

Future studies can focus on empirical research methods with more primary data analysis. For example, primary data can be obtained through surveys and interviews, and the effects of specific family capital items on college students' employment intentions can be further studied. Based on quantitative controlled experiments, the stimulation methods that can promote students' grassroots employment intention can be found and validated, such as appropriate grassroots introduction and employment training and grassroots employment subsidy programs.

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