

Study on the Relationship between Psychological Capital, Self-management and Employment Anxiety

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Abstract: Based on the theory of resource preservation, we explore the relationship between psychological capital, self-management and employment anxiety of college students, and investigate the intermediary role of self-management between psychological capital and employment anxiety. With 500 college students from a normal university, the positive psychological capital questionnaire, college students' self-management questionnaire and employment anxiety scale were used for measurement and analysis. Related analysis results show that the college students' psychological capital and employment anxiety and employment anxiety's dimensions, including competition pressure, social support, self-confidence, and employment prospects significant negative correlation, significant positive correlation with self management, self-management and employment anxiety and employment competition pressure, lack of social support, lack of self-confidence, employment prospects concerns dimension is significant negative correlation. Mediation analysis shows that self-management plays a partial mediating role between psychological capital and employment anxiety after controlling for gender and origin. Psychological capital not only directly affects employment anxiety, but also indirectly affects individual employment anxiety by improving the level of self-management.

Keywords: college students, psychological capital, self-management, employment anxiety

Introduction

Employment anxiety refers to the persistent and strong psychological state such as worry and tension in the employment situation, accompanied by a series of changes in physiological and behavioral reactions.^[1] It belongs to a kind of state anxiety, mainly including four factors: employment competition pressure, lack of employment support, lack of self-confidence and concern about employment prospects. Appropriate employment anxiety can stimulate the internal motivation of individual employment, while excessive employment anxiety will make individuals produce negative cognitive bias in employment. Therefore, is a bit awkward. Suggest revising to "It is crucial to understand the factors influencing employment anxiety and its mechanisms to alleviate students' concerns and improve career adaptability^[2].

Based on COR theory, psychological capital, as a key resource, refers to a positive psychological state formed in the process of individual growth and development, including four core components: hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism.^[3] Those with high psychological capital have enough key resources, have sufficient competence, clearly locate and give full play to their advantages, and create more psychological resources. In the employment situation, individuals with high psychological capital level, in order to avoid losses or waste of resources, actively attribute to negative events such as employment anxiety, are more willing to accept their current employment situation and have optimistic

employment prospects. At the same time, individuals also have a strong psychological resilience when they face employment setbacks. Therefore, this study proposes the hypothesis that H1: psychological capital will significantly negatively predict individual employment anxiety.

Self-management is a kind of constructive resource formed by individuals in the process of socialization, and key resources can promote individuals to select and apply constructive resources in a positive and effective way.^[4] Therefore, this study believes that self-management may be the intermediary variable of psychological capital affecting employment anxiety. Individuals with high self-management show higher cognitive flexibility in career adaptation. In the employment situation, individuals actively adjust their cognitive resources to bias attention to positive information, are more likely to produce positive attribution evaluation, and have more positive emotional employment experience.

Individuals with a high level of psychological capital fully recognize their competence and the ability to create self-value, actively mobilize constructive resources such as self-management in frustration and difficulties, and actively manage their cognition, emotions and behaviors, which is reflected in the positive influence of psychological capital on self-management. From the point of COR theory, as a constructive of individual resources, the higher self management level, the individual is more willing to invest resources, in order to get more positive psychological resources, improve personal professional competitiveness, when facing the reality or potential pressure and threat, individual can more cope and solve the employment situation, is beneficial to alleviate the employment anxiety^[5]. Therefore, this study proposes hypothesis H2: self-management significantly negatively predicts employment anxiety in individuals. As for how psychological capital affects employment anxiety, self-management is a kind of constructive resource formed in the process of individual socialization. Key resources can promote individuals to choose and apply constructive resources in a positive and effective way. Based on hypothesis H2, H3: self-management plays a mediating role between psychological capital and employment anxiety. Therefore, this study intends to examine the effect of psychological capital on employment anxiety and to examine the mediating role of self-management.

1. Research object and method

1.1 Research object

500 college students from a normal university were selected as the research objects, and a total of 500 questionnaires were distributed. After eliminating invalid questionnaires, 492 valid questionnaires were obtained, including 189 male students, 303 female students, 212 urban students and 280 rural students, aged 18-25 years old.

1.2 Research method

1.2.1 Positive psychological capital questionnaire

Using the positive psychological capital questionnaire compiled by Zhang Kuo et al., a total of 26 questions, including four dimensions of self-efficacy, resilience, hope and optimism. The α coefficient of the scale in this study was 0.962.

1.2.2 Self-management questionnaire for college students

The self-management questionnaire for college students compiled by Zhang Guoli et al. has a total of 42 questions, mainly including four dimensions: behavior management, emotion management, time management and cognitive management. The α coefficient of the scale in this study was 0.932.

1.2.3 Employment anxiety scale of college students

Using the employment anxiety questionnaire compiled by Zhang Yuzhu et al., there were 26 questions, including employment competition pressure, lack of employment support, insufficient self-confidence, and concern about employment prospects. The α coefficient of the scale in this study was 0.981.

1.2.4 Statistical treatment

Description statistics and correlation analysis were performed using SPSS27.0 and Amos24.0 software, and mediation

effect were tested using structural equation model.

2. Interpretation of result

2.1 Common method deviation test

This study used questionnaires to collect data and common methodological bias^[6]. Using the exploratory factor analysis of the data without rotation, we found that nine predictors had feature roots greater than 1, and the interpretation rate of the first principal component was 38.14%, 40% less than the critical value, so there was no serious common method bias in this study.

2.2 Description, statistics and correlation analysis of each variable

There were significant differences in psychological capital, self-management and employment anxiety. Boys were significantly higher than girls in psychological capital and self-management scores, while boys were significantly lower than girls in employment anxiety. College students from rural areas were significantly lower than urban college students in psychological capital and self-management scores, but urban college students were significantly lower than rural college students in terms of employment anxiety, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Comparison of undergraduate psychological capital, self-management and employment anxiety on demographic variables($\bar{x}\pm s$)

Demographic variables(n)	Psychological capital	Self-management	Employment anxiety
Gender Male (189)	127.14±10.04	144.83±12.95	72.31±9.48
Female (303)	121.96±9.93	136.94±12.73	74.58±10.12
t	4.221**	6.722**	-2.411*
Origin Rural (280)	122.7±9.61	137.57±13.21	74.48±9.76
Town (212)	125.83±10.08	144.20±13.39	72.53±9.69
t	-3.304**	-4.712**	2.112*

Notes: *P <0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001, the same below

College students' psychological capital was significantly negatively correlated with employment anxiety and its four dimensions, which showed the largest correlation with employment competition pressure, psychological capital with self-management, self-management and significantly negative correlation with employment anxiety and its four dimensions, among which showed the largest correlation with employment competition pressure, as shown in Table 2. The association of gender and origin with employment anxiety was significant, so both were included in control variables in subsequent data analysis.

2.3 The mediation effect test of self-management

The hypothesis model of this study with psychological capital as independent variable, self-management as intermediary variable, employment anxiety as dependent variable, and gender and origin as control variables, using structural equation model test and self-management mediation, model fitting results shown in Table 3, χ^2 / df in 1~3, NFI, CFI, TLI above 0.95, RMSEA is less than 0.06, indicating that the whole model is good fit.

Table 2 Correlation analysis of each variable(r)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Psychological capital	1						
Self-management	0.749**	1					
Employment competition pressure	-0.349**	-0.468**	1				

Lack of social support	-0.141**	-0.149**	0.213**	1		
Lack of confidence	-0.162**	-0.211**	0.371**	0.451**	1	
Employment prospects worry	-0.198**	-0.231**	0.348**	0.270*	0.391**	1
Employment anxiety	-0.312**	-0.393**	0.778**	0.639**	0.732**	0.749**

Table 3 Fitting index of the mediation model

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	NFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA(90% CI)
Model	107.324	47	2.410	0.963	0.959	0.948	0.061(0.041,0.067)

The results of the Bootstrap-test for the self-administered mediation effect are shown in Table 4, and the data were repeatedly sampled 5,000 times to calculate the corrected bias Confidence interval of difference Bootstrap95%. It was found that the direct effect value of psychological capital on employment anxiety was-0.249, the 95% confidence interval was [-0.367, -0.141], excluding 0, and the proportion of direct effect on the total effect was 70.66%, indicating that the direct prediction effect of psychological capital on employment anxiety was significant. The indirect effect value of self-management between psychological capital and employment anxiety is-0.109,95% confidence interval [-0.203, -0.019], excluding 0, and the proportion of indirect effect is 30.34% of the total effect. The results show that self-management plays a partial mediating role between psychological capital and employment anxiety, and the mediation model diagram is shown in Figure 1.

Table 4 Bootstrap mediation effect test of the method

Path effect	Effect value	SE	(Bootstrap95%CI)		Effect ratio
			lower limit	toplimit	
Psychological capital→The direct effect of employment anxiety	-0.249	0.061	-0.367	-0.141	70.66%
Psychological capital→self-management →Indirect effects of employment anxiety	-0.109	0.042	-0.203	-0.019	30.34%
Psychological capital→The total effect of employment anxiety	-0.357	0.050	-0.449	-0.312	100%

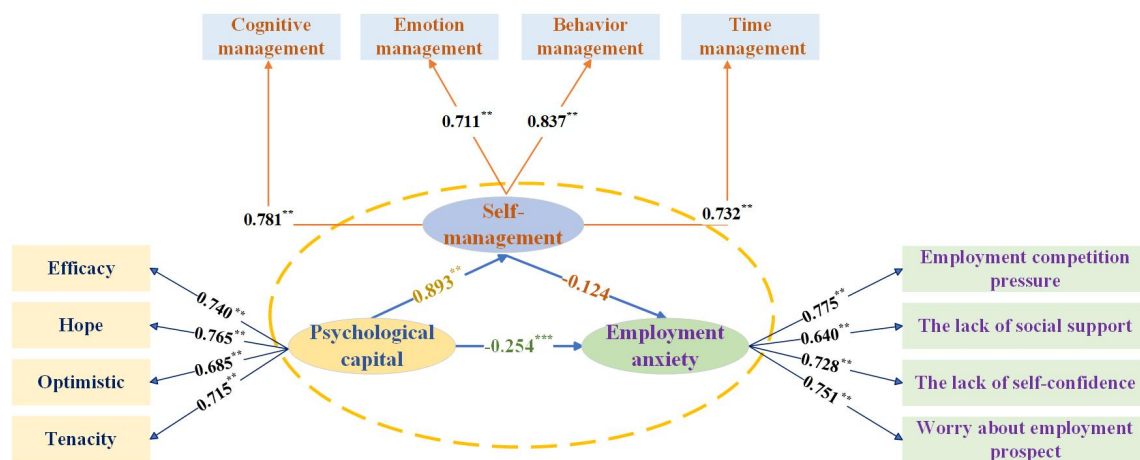


Figure 1 A mediation model of self-management between psychological capital and employment anxiety

3. Research discussion

3.1 The impact of college students' psychological capital on employment

Psychological capital significantly negatively predicted individual employment anxiety, testing the hypothesis of this study^[7]. First, specifically, high psychological capital level of individuals in the process of employment has a strong internal motivation and self-efficacy, willing to challenge the high target, the high cognitive flexibility in the employment pressure situation shows the initiative, adjust the cognitive resources into the present employment situation, the individual is more likely to get positive emotional experience, positive mood is a kind of energy resources of the individual, can actively promote the development of individual cognition and behavior, to alleviate the individual employment anxiety. The higher the psychological capital level of individuals, the stronger their career adaptability. Individuals show attention to positive employment information in the uncertain external environment, and make positive attribution of failure, which further reduces the individual's excessive concern about employment prospects.

3.2 The intermediary role of self-management

Self-management plays a partial mediating role between psychological capital and employment anxiety. This not only supports the positive promotion of constructive resources for individual key resources in COR theory, and also verifies the relevant studies on the mechanisms of individual self-management on employment anxiety. Individuals with high psychological capital level have high self-efficacy and career adaptability in the employment process, and can flexibly transform their cognitive resources to actively self-monitor in the stressful situation of resource loss, and strive to improve their behavioral performance. Even if they encounter failures or setbacks, individuals can seek reasonable emotional regulation strategies to improve their self-management ability, focus on the work situation in the pressure as motivation, and maintain an optimistic attitude to generate positive expectations for the employment prospects. As an important constructive resource for individuals, self-management improves the self-control ability of individual cognition, emotions and behaviors, promotes the positive self-cognition of individuals in real or potential threat situations, and avoids the risk of resource loss of employment anxiety^[9]. Therefore, individuals with high psychological capital level have more key resources to promote their good self-management. In the process of employment, individuals have more autonomy and responsibility, and gain a sense of self-transcendence, so as to achieve smooth employment, which is reflected in the reduction of employment anxiety level.

4. Summary and reflection

4.1 Summary

This study shows that psychological capital can directly predict the degree of individual employment anxiety, and can also reduce the individual employment anxiety by improving the self-management level. As a key resource of a different state, psychological capital can be promoted specifically through effective intervention strategies. First, college students are in the critical period of the development of professional values. Society, schools and families should pay attention to the cultivation and accumulation of key resources such as individual positive psychological capital, support and encourage college students to find employment and entrepreneurship, cultivate college students' confidence in employment, and stimulate individuals to actively invest in psychological capital to improve their personal competitiveness. Second, it is necessary to strengthen the cultivation of college students' self-management, improve their individual autonomy and responsibility consciousness, comprehensively improve their cognitive management, emotion management, time management and behavior management ability, and learn to reasonably adjust their own constructive resources in the fierce competitive environment to achieve self-growth. Finally, the school should strengthen the employment guidance and career planning education for college students, so that college students can establish correct professional values, balance the relationship between ideal self and realistic self, and at the same time, maintain and create positive psychological resources to promote the good development of individual mental health and sound personality^[8].

4.2 Reflection

The results of this study found that COR theory has good theoretical and practical significance for understanding individual employment anxiety. This study explores the intermediary role of self-management between psychological capital and employment anxiety, which has a good reference significance for understanding the mechanism between psychological capital and employment anxiety and alleviating the employment anxiety of college students.

First, this study uses cross-sectional research method to determine the dynamic change relationship of each variable in the time dimension. In the future, longitudinal research method can be used to explore the causal relationship among the variables. Second, COR theory involves individuals and social resources. College students are in the critical stage of the transition from school to society, and social resources are also crucial to the social adaptation and development of individuals. Future studies can simultaneously explore the influence of individuals and social resources on their social development.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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