



THE IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL AND EMPLOYMENT ANXIETY ON  
CAREER DECISION AMONG FOURTH-YEAR STUDENTS IN CHINA



TENGJIAO FANG

Graduate School Srinakharinwirot University

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THE IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL AND EMPLOYMENT ANXIETY ON  
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TENGJIAO FANG

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of MASTER OF EDUCATION  
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THE THESIS TITLED

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BY

TENGJIAO FANG

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UNIVERSITY

-----  
(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chatchai Ekpanyaskul, MD.)

Dean of Graduate School  
-----

ORAL DEFENSE COMMITTEE

..... Major-advisor ..... Chair  
(Assoc. Prof. Dr.Monthira Jarupeng) (Assoc. Prof. Dr.Ujsara Prasertsin)

..... Co-advisor ..... Committee  
(Assoc. Prof. Dr.Patcharaporn Srisawat) (Lecturer Dr.Kanchit Saenubol)

Title	THE IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL AND EMPLOYMENT ANXIETY ON CAREER DECISION AMONG FOURTH-YEAR STUDENTS IN CHINA
Author	TENGJIAO FANG
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Thesis Advisor	Associate Professor Doctor Monthira Jarupeng
Co Advisor	Associate Professor Doctor Patcharaporn Srisawat

This aims research are as follows: (1) to study the correlation between employment anxiety, psychological capital, and students' career decisions; (2) to study the influence of employment anxiety and psychological capital on students' career decisions. The data was collected through the questionnaire format. The questionnaire is divided into three parts: employment anxiety, psychological capital, and career decisions. The population were students from the School of Science and Technology at Hubei University of Automobile Technology. From more than 1000 students majoring in mechanical design, manufacturing, automation, and product design, Krejcie and Morgan tables were used to determine the sample size, and 300 students were randomly sampled. The research results indicated that: (1) Employment anxiety (Pearson correlation coefficient=-0.069) did not correlate to student career decisions, while psychological capital (Pearson correlation coefficient=0.946) was related to student career decisions; (2) employment anxiety and career decisions ( $B=-0.010$ ) were low impact, while psychological capital and career decision ( $B=0.946$ ) had a greater impact. Students with high levels of employment anxiety have lower enthusiasm for career decisions, while students with high levels of psychological capital have higher enthusiasm for career decisions. The positive impact of psychological capital is significantly greater than employment anxiety.

Keyword : Career decisions, Employment anxiety, Psychological capital, College students

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TENGJIAO FANG

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

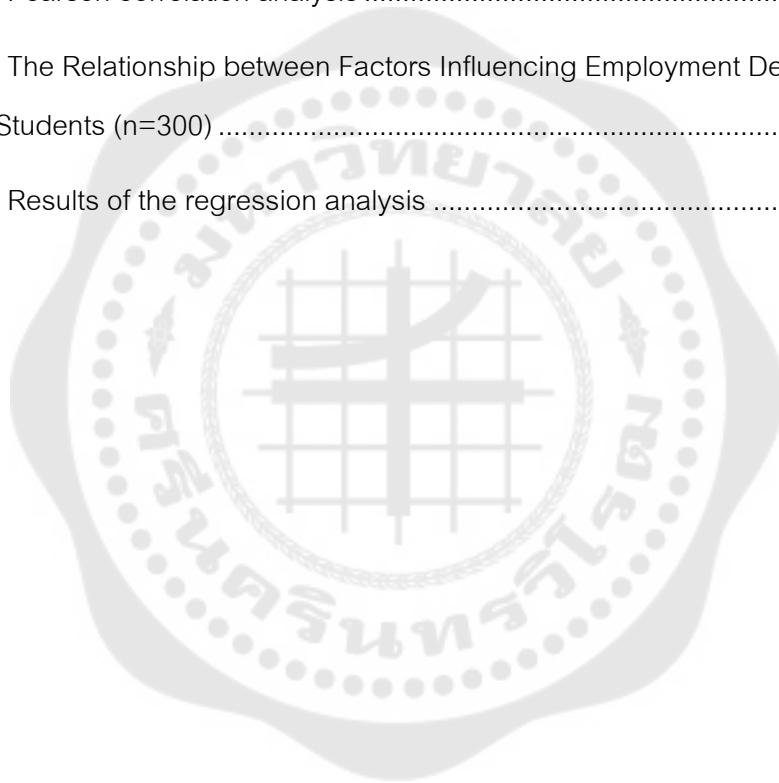
	Page
ABSTRACT .....	D
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	E
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	F
LIST OF TABLES.....	H
LIST OF FIGURES .....	I
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Research Question .....	3
1.3 Research objective .....	3
1.4 Research significance .....	3
1.5 Research scope.....	4
1.6 Definition of Terms .....	5
1.7 Research framework .....	5
1.8 Research Hypothesis.....	6
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
2.1 Employment Anxiety .....	7
2.2 Psychological Capital .....	8
2.3 Career decision.....	10
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHOD.....	13
3.1 Research Design .....	13
3.2 Population and Sample.....	13

3.3 Research Instruments .....	13
3.4 Data Collection .....	17
3.5 Data Analysis .....	17
CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH RESULTS.....	18
4.1 The general data of students.....	19
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION.....	23
5.1 Introduction .....	23
5.2 Result and Discussion .....	23
5.3 Discussion of the Results.....	24
5.4 Suggestions .....	26
5.5 Vision for Future Research.....	30
REFERENCES.....	32
APPENDIX .....	36
VITA .....	44



## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
TABLE 1 Basic information of students.....	19
TABLE 2 Mean and standard deviation of the Employment Anxiety、 Psychological Capital and Career Decision(n=300) .....	20
TABLE 3 Pearson correlation analysis .....	20
TABLE 4 The Relationship between Factors Influencing Employment Decisions of College Students (n=300) .....	21
TABLE 5 Results of the regression analysis .....	21



## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
FIGURE 1 Conceptual framework.....	5



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The number of fresh graduates from Chinese universities will reach 11.58 million. The problem of employment difficulties caused by such a large number of college graduates is increasing year by year. Many college students have negative, biased, and misaligned employment decision psychology. Therefore, we need to integrate and analyze these issues, and provide targeted guidance based on the subjective and objective factors that college students face when facing employment. In addition to the impact of the COVID-19, the employment environment is also changing. The emergence of many "cloud concepts" has led to the birth of many new industries in society, which require more objective and comprehensive consideration of college students' psychology and employment concepts, to provide a series of effective employment planning and guidance for college students' employment, so that they can reasonably adjust their psychological state and choice expectations, and solve the problem of difficult employment for college students. (Wang,2023)

In summary, contemporary college students are full of employment challenges and pressures. This article is based on this foundation Selecting college students from the School of Science and Technology of Hubei University of Automotive Technology as the research and research objects, with the impact of employment anxiety and psychological capital on college students' employment decision as the research goal, exploring and thinking about how to improve college students' self-awareness and employment cognition, as well as how to build a more scientific employment planning guidance system, and more effectively guide college students to establish correct employment concepts and value orientations.

Since the expansion of enrollment in Chinese universities, there has been a significant transformation in China's higher education. China's higher education is moving from the era of "elite education" to the era of "mass education". According to the educational research theory of American scholar Martin Trow, the higher education

gross enrollment rate below 15% is the elite education stage, 15% -50% is the mass education stage, and more than 50% is the universal education stage (Zeng ,2009). Wang (2019) found that the psychology of employment decision among college students plays a fundamental and decisive role in the employment process. Different psychology can guide college students to develop different career plans, employment attitudes, and career cognition.

The psychological factors of employment anxiety among college students may lead them to engage in negative future scenario thinking, which can have a negative impact on their employment choices and even future development. (Xue, 2023). Therefore, this article will study anxiety and depression and examine the impact of these personal psychological factors on employment decisions.

Psychological capital has become a focus of research in the academic community in recent years. Many researchers have demonstrated from different perspectives that psychology can improve people's mental health, happiness, and work performance. Luthans once pointed out that an individual's psychology is renewable, complementary, and even synergistic. Individuals with high psychological capital can utilize their abilities to adapt to various job requirements, and psychological capital can also provide people with more happiness. From Luthans' perspective, we can see that psychological capital can enhance a person's workability and has a relatively important role, but workability is not completely equivalent to employment. In recent years, the positive role that psychological capital may play in employment has also attracted academic attention. Some domestic research results have shown that psychological capital has a significant positive effect on employability, but there is still a lack of empirical analysis to support the relationship between psychological capital and college student employment. (Luthans,2008)

Psychological capital is closely related to career decision self-efficacy. Research has found a significant positive correlation between psychological capital and career decision self-efficacy (Zhang,2016), and the former has a positive predictive effect on the latter.

There is a certain connection between anxiety and career decision. Through a survey of anxious individuals in some domestic universities, it was found that there is a negative correlation between self-efficacy in career decision and anxiety (Bandura&Wang, 2004). Scholars have studied the relationship between exam anxiety and self-efficacy and found that exam anxiety ultimately affects exams through its impact on self-efficacy. This can extend to the career anxiety of college students and ultimately affect their career needs by influencing their self-efficacy. (Zhang, 2002)

## **1.2 Research Question**

1.2.1 What are the factors that correlate to students' employment decisions among students in China ?

1.2.2 What are the factors that effect students' employment decisions among students in China?

## **1.3 Research objective**

1.3.1 to study the correlation between employment anxiety and psychological capital on students' employment decisions.

1.3.2 to study the influence between employment anxiety and psychological capital on students' employment decisions.

## **1.4 Research significance**

### **1.4.1 theoretical significance**

At present, most of the research on employment decision in China focuses on a certain factor, such as the study of employment anxiety on employment decision, or the study of psychological capital on employment decision. This study combines employment anxiety and psychological capital to explore the impact of these two factors on employment decision, providing theoretical support for related research on employment decision among college students. And the latest data information.

### **1.4.2 Practical significance**

The employment of college students is not only related to the students themselves, but also to the entire family. Studying the relationship between employment anxiety and psychological capital on employment decision can better assist college students in finding employment. Through analysis, it is possible to have a more accurate understanding of the employment decisions of college students, assist them in making reasonable employment plans, and better set up relevant teaching methods and courses.

### **1.5 Research scope**

**Time dimension:** This study aims to explore the influence of employment anxiety, and psychological capital on college students' employment decisions from a time dimension. The entire research process was completed within 2 months.

**Regional scope:** This study focuses on students from the School of Science and Technology of Hubei University of Automotive Industry, which is a full-time regular undergraduate school. The influence of anxiety, and psychological capital on college students' employment decisions identified in this study can reflect the psychological factors that influence college students' employment decisions in the city. It can also provide a reference for the psychological factors that affect college students' employment decisions throughout the province and even across the country.

**Object scope:** This study selected two different senior students from the same university, majoring in Mechanical Design, Manufacturing and Automation, and Product Design. There were a total of 30 classes with 30-35 students in each class, with a total of over 1000 students.

**Sample selection:** Using Krejcie and Morgan tables to determine a sample size of 278 people, 300 students were randomly selected from 1000 students.

**Scope of content:** The focus of this study is to understand the impact of employment anxiety, and psychological capital on college students' employment decision.

### 1.6 Definition of Terms

Career decision refers to strategies or methods for an employment decision. This is a complex process that involves information collection and other processes. In psychology, a career decision is a product of a combination of thought and action. Through these two processes, people can make decisions about employment. Therefore, career decision is not only a psychological process but also an action plan for people.

Employment Anxiety: The earliest theory of anxiety was proposed by Danish philosopher Kerkigor, The earliest theory of anxiety was proposed by Danish philosopher Kierkegaard, who pointed out in his book "The Concept of Fear" that anxiety is a feeling that arises when faced with choices. Employment anxiety refers to an emotion that arises when facing employment choices, as well as an emotional response to outcomes and unknowns.

Psychological capital : Psychological capital is a positive psychological factor that can be shaped and has an impact on employment choices and outcomes. Employment psychological capital refers to some positive attitudes in the process of finding a job, including self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience.

### 1.7 Research framework

The independent variables of this study are employment anxiety and psychological capital. The dependent variable is Career decisions. This study was conducted based on the following research framework.

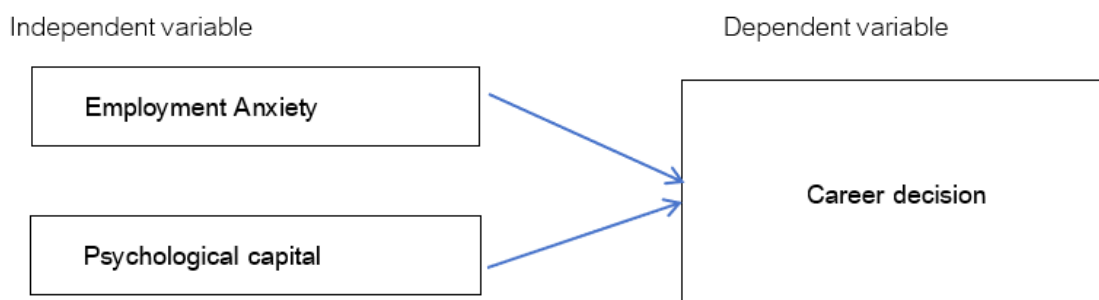


FIGURE 1 Conceptual framework

### 1.8 Research Hypothesis

1) The employment anxiety and psychological capital will correlate on the employment decision psychology of students.

2) The employment Anxiety and psychological capital will influence the employment decisions of students.





## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Employment Anxiety

##### 2.1.1 Definitions of Employment Anxiety

The development of anxiety research was systematically studied by Freud, the founder of the psychoanalytic school, and his followers. Tang and Kuang believe that anxiety is a series of unpleasant and complex emotional states that individuals experience when facing upcoming and potentially dangerous situations, such as tension, entanglement, panic, and irritability (Tang&Kuang,2009). Anxiety arises from knowing that there is a danger but not knowing when it will come, causing people to hold a cautious attitude toward the danger, resulting in psychological states such as helplessness, unease, nervousness, and anxiety(Zhang,1997). When people are anxious, there will always be irrational thinking. Due to the existence of unreasonable thinking, anxious people will experience mental tension and abnormal physical reactions. Therefore, the existence of unreasonable thinking is the essence of anxiety.

##### 2.1.2 Employment anxiety among college students

On the eve of graduation, the vast majority of graduates are worried about whether they can choose their ideal job position, whether they can perform normally in a two-way choice, and appropriately demonstrate their abilities; Will the employer be rejected due to their average academic performance, lack of experience as a student cadre during their school years, lack of expertise, or being a female student; What should I do if I make a mistake in choosing a unit and cause 'eternal hatred'. This concern is normal. But some students, due to this concern, are mentally burdened, nervous, restless, and listless; they Muddle along in learning, struggle to cope, and are slow to react; Depression, loss of appetite, and difficulty falling asleep in daily life. These are not normal manifestations, but a psychological anxiety phenomenon.(Cong,2005)

During college, students' main task is to learn, without being exposed to the external social environment and having little understanding of social reality. Even if they are exposed to social reality, there is still a small amount of contact, without truly

integrating as members of society. This will create certain expectations for students' psychology, believing that society is not as complex as imagined, Insufficient expectations of reality(Regehr, Glancy, Pitts.,2013). In such a context, once entering society, there will be a certain deviation from one's own expectations, leading to certain psychological problems. Moreover, the education received in university is still relatively idealized, and there is a certain difference between the realization of one's own ideals and the harsh reality. Once the expected pressure received in reality is too great, there will be a certain gap in normal psychology, causing a certain level of anxiety.

Family expectations can also have a certain influence on the psychology of college students, and most parents have high expectations in the process of facing students' career choices after graduation. However, with the continuous improvement of teaching and the increasing enrollment of teaching, the number of graduates is also increasing year by year. In this context, students' employment pressure will become increasingly high. However, parents do not understand the actual employment situation of students and believe that as long as they enter university, they can obtain better employment opportunities. If students' employment does not match their expected situation, they will receive pressure from parents, Similarly, it can cause anxiety among students in employment (Luo,2024).

Individual personality differences are one of the main causes of employment anxiety. Due to differences in personality, their level of anxiety also varies. For example, stubborn people generally do not understand and adopt constructive opinions, while those with more sensitive personalities are easily influenced by peripheral factors, placing themselves in anxiety and unable to escape, which can have negative effects on employment emotions.(Su,2023)

## **2.2 Psychological Capital**

### **2.2.1 Definitions of Employment Anxiety**

Lutans proposed the term "psychological capital" from the perspectives of positive psychology and positive organizational behavior in 2004. It is a positive psychological factor that can change and enhance, and have an impact on individuals.

In 2007, Luthans et al. pointed out that "psychological capital refers to the positive psychological state exhibited by individuals in the process of growth and development, including self-efficacy. With the development of positive psychology, the application fields of psychological capital have also been continuously expanded, playing a positive role in student education management.

Psychological capital is a positive psychological quality that emphasizes "who you are" and "what you want to become". It is a force that can enhance an individual's core competitive advantage more than human capital and social capital, and is a powerful psychological resource for improving individual behavior and performance. (Xu & Yu, 2022)

The theory of psychological capital is constantly developing, and the concept of psychological capital is introduced to China and localized. Ke believes that psychological capital is one of the conditions for improving work efficiency, and the development of employee psychological capital should be strengthened. (Ke, 2009) Wang believes that psychological capital refers to the psychological state and quality. For college students, psychological capital is important for learning efficiency or future employment. (Wang, 2019) There is a correlation between psychological capital and employment psychology. Adjusting employment psychology is a very complex process, and utilizing psychological capital can play a regulatory role. (Wang, 2021)

### 2.2.2 Psychological Capital of College Students in Employment

The theoretical foundations of the impact of psychological capital on the employment ability of college students include self-efficacy theory, hope theory, optimistic emotion theory, and resilience theory. The theory of self-efficacy suggests that an individual's confidence in their own abilities directly affects their behavioral performance and outcomes; The Hope Theory emphasizes the relationship between individual expectations and efforts for positive future outcomes; The theory of optimistic emotions proposes that optimistic individuals are more willing to face challenges and are more likely to find solutions to problems; The resilience theory suggests that resilience is a type of accumulation Extreme psychological state can help individuals

maintain stable emotions and actively respond in difficult situations. These theories emphasize the important role of psychological capital in shaping positive attitudes, behavioral performance, and adaptability of college students, providing a theoretical basis for explaining the impact of psychological capital on their employability(Xu,2023).

Previous studies have shown that psychological capital can promote employment performance and help college students establish a competitive advantage in job seeking; Positive psychological capital is not only an important factor affecting the employment competitiveness of college students but also an indispensable psychological resource for promoting personal growth and comprehensive performance. College students are the future of our country and the hope of our nation, and the quality of employment directly affects the development of the country(Zhang&Wang,2022).

Positive psychological capital is not only an important factor affecting the employment competitiveness of college students, but also an indispensable psychological resource for promoting personal growth and comprehensive performance. Psychological factors have a good promoting effect on stimulating the employment potential of college students(Wang&Yao,2020).

## **2.3 Career decision**

### **2.3.1 Definitions of Career decision**

When Jepsen proposed the career decision model in 1974, he first used this concept, believing that a person's career decision is a complex cognitive process. Decision makers organize information related to their career environment, comprehensively and fully consider the prospects of various optional professions, and make public commitments to their own career behavior. Career decision is an important link between the present and the future in career planning, which is related to the future career development of college students and their ability to showcase their talents in suitable positions. It has important practical significance for current students(Peng,2021).

Career decision specifically includes accurate self-awareness of one's own characteristics, practical actions for career exploration and experimentation, and the courage to face various difficulties and challenges in the future career path.

### 2.3.2 Career decision for college students

The relevant factors that affect employment decisions mainly include personal factors, personal arousal level, and family factors. Firstly, the influence of personal factors on self-efficacy is mainly reflected in two aspects. Firstly, different genders are different for employment decision. Men are relatively rational and prefer to engage in challenging work, while women are more emotional and prefer to engage in stable work; Secondly, different individuals have different personal characteristics and tendencies, and their employment decisions are also different. Secondly, everyone has a different level of understanding of their own characteristics and abilities. Some people have a high level of understanding of themselves, and these highly conscious individuals are better able to make accurate evaluations of themselves, actively collect information, determine their career goals, and make correct employment decisions. On the contrary, low-level arousal cannot accurately confirm its own characteristics and make accurate employment decisions. Finally, family factors are also an important factor affecting career decision self-efficacy. They determine what social class you are in from a young age, what kind of people you interact with, and your future network relationships. The self-efficacy of employment decision is influenced by these three aspects from different perspectives and levels of employment(Li,2019).

### 2.4 Research about Employment Anxiety and Career Decision

Gordon's (1998) study found that anxiety affects students' employment uncertainty or long-term inability to make choices. The study investigated pre service teachers who are about to make specific career choices and found that their career uncertainty, anxiety, and sense of powerlessness are positively correlated. Harren (1979) and his colleagues hypothesize that there is a curved relationship between anxiety and employment decision, where either too much or too little anxiety is associated with ineffective decision. However, an appropriate level of anxiety can make

effective employment decisions. His further research suggests that low anxiety individuals have an attitude that they do not need to make decisions, while high anxiety individuals make decisions through avoidance behavior. In the field of employment decision research, Mitchell&Krumboltz (1978) commented on numerous career decision models and pointed out that individuals who are unable to make good employment decisions have higher levels of anxiety. From the above research, it is found that there is a significant positive correlation between the employment decision level and career anxiety of college students. In other words, if college students cannot determine their career choices, their career anxiety level will be higher. Conversely, if college students can determine their career choices, their career anxiety level will be lower.

#### 2.5 Research about Psychological Capital and Career Decision

In the study of the impact of psychological capital on employment, good psychological capital is of great significance in improving an individual's work and employment abilities. Theoretical Research Aspect Most researchers have found through research on the dimensions and mechanisms of positive psychological capital that it promotes employment and work. For example, Zhang et al. (2009) found that employees with higher levels of positive psychological capital exhibit more creativity in their work; Zheng(2010) believes that developing the psychological qualities of college students is an effective way to improve their employability without affecting their professional knowledge learning. Lin Ping et al. (2011) pointed out that schools should incorporate the development of psychological capital into the teaching plans of college students, cultivate and enhance their psychological capital, and improve their own quality.

Cao et al. (2011) They found that the overall psychological capital status of students is good. Psychological capital has a positive impact on employability, indicating its significant role in improving employability.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHOD

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study analyzed whether there is a relationship and the types of impact between employment anxiety, psychological capital, and employment decision.

#### 3.2 Population and Sample

This study selected two senior students from the same university, majoring in Mechanical Design, Manufacturing, Automation, and Product Design. There are a total of 30 classes, each with 30-35 students and over 1000 students. A simple random sampling method was adopted from each major to distribute survey questionnaires to 300 students, with an estimated collection of over 276 questionnaires. The survey questionnaire is divided into three parts: anxiety, psychological capital, and career decision.

Sample: 300 students participated in this study. The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan tables:

$$n = \frac{X^2 N p(1-p)}{e^2(N-1) + X^2 p(1-p)}$$

#### 3.3 Research Instruments

Employment Anxiety Questionnaire for College Graduates:

This questionnaire was developed by scholar Ren(2010) using a structural equation model. After reliability and validity testing, the  $\alpha$  coefficient of the total questionnaire was 0.939, and the  $\alpha$  The coefficients are all higher than 0.89, which meets the requirements of psychometrics and has high reliability and validity in measuring employment anxiety questionnaire measures the anxiety state of college students in employment situations, and includes two dimensions: subjective feelings and physiological behavioral responses. The IOC value is 0.676

There are a total of 17 items in this questionnaire use a 5-point scoring (1=Not at all; 2=A bit; 3=General; 4=Often;5=Always). The higher the total score, the more severe the employment anxiety of the participants.

The following are questions about your psychological state when facing employment problems. Please consider your own mood and actual situation at this time make a choice, and there is no right or wrong answer. According to the degree of compliance, choose 'completely non compliant 1:Not at all; 2:A bit; 3:General; 4:Often;5:Always.

Example:

topic	Not at all	A bit	General	Often	Always
1. When you think of employment, you always feel like a big crisis is coming.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Approaching employment, unable to sleep.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Thinking of employment makes me very restless.	1	2	3	4	5
4. When it comes to employment, there's no appetite for food anymore.	1	2	3	4	5

Psychological Capital Scale:

This scale is the PCQ-24 Psychological Capital Scale developed by world-renowned scholar Luthans and widely used by psychological experts around the world. Numerous empirical studies have shown that the fitting index of the four factor model is the most ideal. The IOC value is 0.729.

Here are some sentences that describe how you may currently perceive yourself. Please use the following scale to determine the degree to which you agree or disagree with these descriptions.



1=Not at all; 2=A bit; 3=General; 4=Often;5=Always

Example:

topic	Not at all	A bit	General	Often	Always
1.I believe I can analyze long-term problems and find solutions.	1	2	3	4	5
2.When meeting with the management, I am confident in stating things within my scope of work.	1	2	3	4	5
3.I believe I have contributed to the discussion of the company's strategy.	1	2	3	4	5
4.Within my scope of work or study, I believe I can help set goals.	1	2	3	4	5

Career Decision Scale:

This scale was developed by Yang Hui (Capital University of Economics and Trade, 2022) and tested for reliability. At the beginning of its preliminary design, the components of the scale were determined: professional knowledge, goal determination, professional beliefs, behavioral preparation, choice ability, and self-evaluation. Therefore, the study conducted reliability tests on the six dimensions of the scale and the results of the total scale. The reliability result value of the Career Decision Scale is 0.972, a threshold standard greater than 0.70. At the same time, based on the initial CITC coefficient results of each question item, it can be seen that the value is between 0.533 and 0.850, both of which are greater than the threshold standard of 0.40. From the reliability results of the six dimensions of career decision, the reliability results of career knowledge, goal determination, career belief, behavioral preparation, choice ability, and self-evaluation are 0.923, 0.829, 0.890, 0.914, 0.889, and 0.879, respectively, with

reliability results values greater than 0.7. The Cronbach's coefficient after deleting each question item is less than 0.972 indicates that all items should be retained. Therefore, both the overall reliability results of the career decision scale and the reliability results of all dimensions of the scale show good internal consistency. The IOC value is 0.771.

Scoring methods: 1-4 questions on professional knowledge, 5-8 questions on goal determination, 9-12 questions on professional beliefs, 13-16 questions on behavioral preparation, 17-20 questions on choice ability, and 21-24 questions on self-evaluation. Not at all for 1 point, A bit for 2 points, General for 3 points, Often for 4 points, Always for 5 points.

Example

	Not at all	A bit	General	Often	Always
1. I have a clear understanding of the talent supply and demand situation and future development direction I want to pursue in my profession/industry	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know what profession/industry I want to pursue and can accurately describe it	1	2	3	4	5
3. I understand the basic situation, future development, and skill requirements of the corresponding profession/industry	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am aware of the general working environment, salary and benefits of the general enterprise units in which I want to work in the industry	1	2	3	4	5

The validity and reliability of measurement

Employment Anxiety Questionnaire for College Graduates (IOC=0.676), Psychological Capital Scale (IOC=0.729), Career Decision Scale (IOC=0.771). Three leading experts reviewed the scale's content validity to ensure that the wording of all questions was appropriate and aligned with the definitions of each factor. The scale's IOC value ranges from 0.67 to 1, demonstrating strong reliability.

The reliability coefficient alpha values of the Employment Anxiety Questions for College Graduates are 0.987, the Psychological Capital Scale, and the Career Decision Scale, respectively. These scales have a reliability coefficient alpha value greater than 0.9, indicating high reliability of the research data. The CITC values for each question are greater than 0.4, indicating a good correlation and reliability level between the analysis items.

### 3.4 Data Collection

Utilize the school's information collection system to uniformly distribute questionnaires for surveys at designated times. After the survey is completed, a unified survey questionnaire will be collected. After the collection is completed, delete the invalid questionnaire. Classify and organize anxiety, psychological capital and career decision, to obtain the final research results.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

All data were processed and statistically analyzed with software. Conduct descriptive analysis and statistical analysis:

1. Descriptive statistics: mean, standard test, percentage
2. The correlation of this study used a statistical measure: Pearson correlation
3. regression analysis is used to analyze the statistical impact

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH RESULTS

#### Symbols Used in Data Analysis

Data analysis and mean of result of data analysis researcher determine symbol used data analysis.

n	Replace	Sample Size
M	Replace	Mean
S D	Replace	Standard Deviation
b	Replace	Raw cores Linear Regression
SE	Replace	Standard Error
$\beta$	Replace	Standard Scores Linear Regression
$R^2$	Replace	Square Multiple Correlation Coefficient
$R_{adj}^2$	Replace	Adjust Square Multiple Correlation Coefficient
df	Replace	Degree of Freedom
F	Replace	F-Test
t	Replace	t-test
p	Replace	p-value

#### Abbreviation Used in Data Analysis

Researcher determine abbreviation used data analysis.

X_1	Replace	Employment Anxiety
X_2	Replace	Psychological Capital
Y	Replace	Career Decision

#### 4.1 The general data of students.

Analyze the quantity and percentage of general data for college students in a table.

TABLE 1 Basic information of students

Basic information of college students	The quantity of students	Percentage
<b>1. Gender</b>		
Male	182	60.67
Female	118	39.33
Total	300	100
<b>2. Employment Anxiety level</b>		
low(0-28score)	0	0
general(29-56score)	20	6.67
high(57-85score)	280	93.33
Total	300	100
<b>Psychological Capital level</b>		
low(0-40score)	0	0
general(41-80score)	144	48
high(81-120score)	156	52
Total	300	100
<b>Career Decision level</b>		
low(0-40score)	0	0
general(41-80score)	135	45
high(81-120score)	165	55
Total	300	100

From the table 1, The number of males is 60.67%, and the number of females is 39.33%. The proportion of people with employment anxiety levels ranging from low to high is 0%, 6.67%, and 93.33%, respectively. The proportion of individuals with low to high levels of psychological capital is 0%, 48%, and 52%, respectively. The proportion of career decision levels from low to high is 0%, 45%, and 55%, respectively.

Descriptive Statistics to Analyze Employment Anxiety, Psychological Capital, and Career Decision.

TABLE 2 Mean and standard deviation of the Employment Anxiety, Psychological Capital and Career Decision(n=300)

Items	M	SD	Levels
Employment Anxiety(X1)	75.813	11.164	high
Psychological Capital(X2)	82.647	20.327	high
Career Decision(Y)	84.84	20.319	high

From the table 2, Employment Anxiety(X1)(M=75.813 SD=11.164), Psychological Capital(X2)(M=82.647 SD=20.327) and Career Decision(Y)(M=84.84 SD=20.319), They are all at a high level.

Using Pearson correlation analysis to analyze the correlation between employment anxiety, psychological capital, and career decision.

TABLE 3 Pearson correlation analysis

Factors	X1	X2	Y
X1	1		
X2	-0.067	1	
Y	-0.069	0.946*	1

\* p<0.01

From the table 3, The Correlation coefficient values of Employment Anxiety (X1) and Career Decision (Y) is -0.069, showing a negative correlation. The Correlation coefficient values of Employment Anxiety (X1) and Psychological Capital (X2) is -0.067, showing a negative correlation. The Correlation coefficient values of Psychological Capital (X2) and Career Decision (Y) is 0.946, showing a significant positive correlation.

Using linear regression analysis to analyze employment anxiety, psychological capital, and career decision.

TABLE 4 The Relationship between Factors Influencing Employment Decisions of College Students (n=300)

The Factors Affecting	Tolerance	VIF
Psychological Capital(X2)	0.996	1.005

The Tolerance factor that affects the employment decision of college students is 0.996, not exceeding 3, and the VIF is 1.005, not exceeding 5. So regression analysis was conducted.

TABLE 5 Results of the regression analysis

The Factors Affecting	b	SE	t	$\beta$	p
(Constant)	7.43	3.136	2.369*	-	0.018
Psychological Capital(X2)	0.946	0.019	50.295*	0.946	0.000

R =0.946 R<sup>2</sup>= 0.895 R<sub>adj</sub><sup>2</sup>= 0.895 F=1271.487 df=299 p=0.00

\*p<.05

From the table 5, When conducting an F-test on the model, it was found that the model passed the F-test (F=1271.487, p=0.000<0.05), which indicates that at least one item in the Employment Anxiety and Psychological Capital will have an impact on the Career Decision. In addition, when testing the multicollinearity of the model, it was found that all VIF values in the model are less than 5, indicating that there is no collinearity

issue. The B value of Psychological Capital is 0.946 ( $t=50.295$ ,  $p=0.000<0.01$ ), indicating that Psychological Capital has a significant positive impact on Career Decisions.

Equation Predict Raw Score

$$Y=7.430(\text{Constant}) + 0.946* \text{Psychological Capital}(X_2)$$

Equation Predict Standard Score

$$ZY = 0.996 X_2$$





## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

This study used Pearson correlation analysis to investigate the correlation between career decisions, employment anxiety, and psychological capital, respectively. The result shows as Employment Anxiety and psychological capital are correlated with student career decisions.

Using regression analysis method to analyze the impact of employment anxiety and psychological capital on career decision. The results indicate that employment anxiety has no impact on career decision. Psychological capital has a significant positive impact on career decision, meaning that the higher the level of psychological capital, the lower the enthusiasm for career decision. The positive impact of psychological capital on career decision,  $B=0.946$ , is significantly greater than the impact of employment anxiety on career decision,  $B=-0.010$ .

By analyzing the average values of various variables, it was found that students have higher levels of employment anxiety, psychological capital, and career decision. Due to the significantly lower impact of employment anxiety compared to the positive impact of psychological capital, although the average score of employment anxiety is 75.813, it is not as significant as the average score of psychological capital of 82.647. Therefore, the average score for career decision is 84.84 points, which is at a relatively high level. Although students may experience employment anxiety, they still have high psychological capital and can actively participate in career decision.

#### 5.2 Result and Discussion

The result of this study is 1) Psychological capital were correlated with student career decisions and Employment anxiety didn't correlate with student career decisions  
2) The positive influence of Psychological Capital is significantly greater on student career decisions

### 5.3 Discussion of the Results

#### 5.3.1 Discussion about Employment Anxiety among Students

The results of this study indicate that employment anxiety is not related to employment decision, which is consistent with previous research by scholars.

Zhang's (2005) study showed that there is little correlation between employment anxiety and employment decision (correlation coefficient of -0.365).

In current research, gender is a significant influencing factor. Due to high career expectations and gender discrimination in the workplace, women have significantly higher levels of employment anxiety than men (Shi, 2002). However, some studies have found that there is no significant difference in employment anxiety (Kang, 2006; Gu, 2007), while others have concluded that the proportion of men with employment anxiety is higher than that of women (Li, 2012), and male college students have significantly higher graduation anxiety than female college students (Zhu, 2008). Therefore, further research is needed to verify the differences in employment anxiety between men and women.

The difference in schools is also one of the factors affecting employment anxiety among college students. Tang (2008) analyzed 681 college graduates and found significant differences in employment anxiety between graduates from key universities and those from ordinary universities. The results of a questionnaire survey conducted by Zhang, Dan, and Nuomin (2005) on 426 college graduates showed that vocational college graduates had significantly higher levels of state anxiety than undergraduate graduates.

There are also differences in the level of employment anxiety among college students majoring in various fields. The employment anxiety of students majoring in economics, medicine, and engineering is lower than that of students majoring in humanities and science (Zhang & Chen, 2006). There are also studies showing that the employment anxiety of students majoring in humanities is significantly higher than that of students majoring in science (Feng & Dai, 2002); The employment anxiety of non-normal students is much higher than that of normal students (Li & Wang, 2016).

The family upbringing environment has a significant impact on employment anxiety among college students. In the study by Zou and Chen(2013), the social status and occupational background of parents can have an impact on the anxiety level of graduates. If the employment choices of graduates are inconsistent with the expectations of parents, it will also cause significant pressure on graduates and lead to employment anxiety. Duan et al. (2017) found that good parenting styles, such as parental emotional warmth and understanding, are negatively correlated with various factors in employment anxiety, while poor parenting styles are significantly positively correlated. The research results of Ma(2014) show that college students from financially disadvantaged families are more likely to develop employment anxiety than ordinary college students.

### 5.3.2 Discussion about the Psychological Capital of Students

Based on the findings of this study, the greater the level of psychological capital among college students, the greater the impact on career decisions. This is consistent with previous research findings, and this study shows that the influence of psychological capital is greater than anxiety. Therefore, we should pay more attention to the cultivation of psychological capital. This is also consistent with previous research by scholars

Psychological capital is closely related to self-efficacy in career decisions. Zhang (2012) found a significant positive correlation between psychological capital and employment decision, and the former has a positive predictive effect on the latter. Tian Juan et al. (2014) found that career planning group counseling based on psychological capital theory can effectively improve the career decision self-efficacy of college students. Luo and Shao(2016) studied college students and found that psychological capital is significantly positively correlated with their employment decisions and various dimensions. Zhou(2014) found that employment decision among college students is influenced by the level of psychological capital, and psychological capital and its various dimensions are significantly positively correlated with career decision self-efficacy. Duan and Xu(2017) found that psychological capital plays a completely

mediating role between social support and employment decisions. Positive psychological capital is positively correlated with employment decisions, and the richer the positive psychological capital, the higher the employment decision level of college students. There is a close relationship between psychological capital and career decision self-efficacy.

The situation of employment incompetence among college students is not only due to the employment environment, but ultimately leads to insufficient development of psychological capital in terms of dimensions, hope, happiness, and resilience (Du &Gong,2020).From various dimensions of employment psychological capital, boys are more resilient than girls, and girls are more optimistic than boys; Students from urban areas are more proactive than those from rural areas(Cao&Zhang ,2023).Poor students are weaker in terms of employment ability and psychological capital compared to non- poor students, and their distribution is more concentrated(Wang,2020). Through the research of scholars, it has been found that psychological capital, like anxiety, presents different states under the influence of factors such as gender, urban and rural areas, and family economy.

In response to these issues, this article proposes the following suggestions.

As college students, when improving their own positive psychological capital stock, they should not only pay attention to some aspect of positive psychological capital, so as to avoid shortcomings, but also pay attention to the overall psychological capital. The various dimensions are interrelated, and the lack of a certain part will affect the overall level of positive psychological capital.

## **5.4 Suggestions**

### **5.4.1 Recommendations for Schools**

Establish a professional team of staff and provide standardized training for employment guidance personnel. Schools can select employment staff in batches to receive professional and systematic training or expand to counselors, providing opportunities for everyone to learn relevant knowledge, so that students can master the theory of career guidance and better serve students.

Schools can also invite alumni who have achieved success in their careers to take on some teaching tasks or give special lectures during their leisure time. They can address the employment anxiety of college students, systematically analyze social employment hotspots, teach employment knowledge, career selection and entrepreneurship skills, interview skills, etc. They can also share their previous experiences of success or failure with students.

The current curriculum system generally faces the problem of mismatch with market demand changes. The current curriculum still focuses on professional introduction, college career theory, promotion of employment policies, and general discussion of job interview skills. This kind of curriculum weakens the cultivation of students' social etiquette and interpersonal communication skills, and neglects the guidance and education on the role positioning, psychological adjustment, and work attitude of graduates after entering the workplace, lacking scientific and practical effectiveness. It is recommended to boldly reform the curriculum, add effective new content, and continuously improve the pertinence, practicality, and effectiveness of career guidance.

In response to the lack of positive emotions among students, schools should focus on cultivating their positive emotions. By conducting diverse extracurricular activities, and organizing emotional communication and psychological adjustment training, we can help students establish an optimistic and positive emotional state, enabling them to better face the challenges in employment.

#### 5.4.2 Suggestions for Families

During the job search process, parental support and encouragement are crucial. Parents need to give their children full trust and encouragement, allowing them to face competition, challenge themselves, and constantly explore and try.

To respect and understand children, parents should also complete their identity transformation when children are looking for jobs, avoiding excessive protection or intervention. When children face job difficulties, parents can think from their children's perspective, understand their anxiety and unease, and not blame or suppress them. To

give children full trust, respect their career choices, and believe that through hard work, they can find a suitable job.

Parents should regularly communicate with their children, understand their thoughts and needs, and approach employment issues rationally. In communication, guide children to have a correct understanding of employment pressure and help them establish a correct outlook on employment.

If a child experiences significant psychological distress and pressure during their employment period, in addition to parental support and concern, it is also recommended that the child seek more professional psychological services and support.

#### 5.4.3 Advice to students

The first thing college students need to do in the job search process is to recognize themselves. Understanding one's interests, strengths, personality, and values can help one better determine their career direction. Understanding oneself not only requires understanding one's interests and strengths, but also clarifying one's professional values. Different people have different pursuits for their work. Some value salary and benefits, some value career development opportunities, and some value work life balance. Clarifying one's career values can help oneself make more inner choices when choosing a career.

Develop self-efficacy. By strengthening self-creative thinking is an effective way to develop self-efficiency, flexible and innovative thinking can help students faster and better learning and life, stimulate students' curiosity and curiosity, on the one hand, cultivate college students to realize their social value, through, realize the real life value to learn and study, in the active exploration with open vision and mind, training and creative thinking; on the other hand to guide students to master scientific methodology, solve the problem step by step, better solve the problems in life, to realize the improvement of self-efficiency.

Development of hope. How to achieve the goal is at the core of wanting to open up, The goal step-by-step method is used to decompose the overall goal of an

individual into multiple subgoals according to their nature and feasibility, And set certain facility stages for each sub-target, Combined with their own actual situation to set in line with their own development needs of the phased implementation of sub-targets, Then strictly in accordance with the target to develop feasible plans and urge themselves to take active action, Do not slack off, Don't give up easily, Efforts to achieve these phased goals, The achievement of these subgoals, To some extent represents the success and end of a stage, And will also have a positive impact on the next stage, Can bring great promotion and inspiration, To drive the smooth implementation of the next stage, This progressive positive encouragement effect is exactly reflects the huge effect of psychological capital promotion.

Optimistic development. Taking effective measures to strengthen the positive attribution dimension can effectively develop optimism. In the employment planning for the correct orientation and fixed and positioning, orientation is clear struggle direction of life, make clear, white what you want, want to be what kind of person, designated is to clear the direction of the individual struggle and society, vision and demand, personal career desire and the best combination between social effective reality, positioning requirements for individual development in the effective social reality and the results have a clear prediction.

Development toughness. To guide college students to view and face setbacks correctly, we can start from two aspects: strengthening students' own consciousness and building a social support system. Firstly, take effective measures to transform students 'consciousness, strengthen students' resilience, such as guiding the objective existence of setbacks, encourage students to strengthen the awareness of self-response, learn to analyze and judge, summarize and summarize, family and society to create a harmonious, efficient and progressive social support system for college students.

Confidence and a positive attitude are the key to successful job hunting. College students should have confidence in themselves, believe in their abilities and values, and view every interview as an opportunity to showcase themselves. At the same

time, maintain a positive attitude, not give up on failure, not be proud of success, and face every challenge with a peaceful attitude.

During the job search process, you may encounter various difficulties and challenges, such as job failure, unsatisfactory work, etc. College students need to have a resilient mindset and be brave enough to face these difficulties and challenges. Never give up in the face of difficulties, constantly adjust your mentality and strategy, and believe that you will be able to find your ideal job.

During the job search process, college students should also pay attention to maintaining physical and mental balance. Life, study, and health are equally important. It is important to arrange time reasonably, ensure sufficient rest and appropriate exercise. Physical and mental health is the foundation of everything, and only by maintaining a good physical and mental state can we better cope with the challenges in job hunting.

College students should actively learn professional knowledge and master professional skills, which is not only the foundation for future careers, but also an important aspect of demonstrating their competitiveness in the job search process. In addition to professional skills, college students should also expand their knowledge across different fields and improve their overall quality. Obtaining a skills certificate is also an important means to enhance employment competitiveness.

### **5.5 Vision for Future Research**

Subsequent related research can be conducted in stages during the initial, mid-term, and later stages of college student job search. Increasing the time span helps to observe the dynamic changes in career decision, employment anxiety, and psychological capital of college students, and highlights the key points of job guidance for college students at different job seeking stages.

The ultimate goal of psychological research is to guide social practice. The psychological qualities related to employment, as a necessary condition for contemporary college students to enter society and enterprises, are a long-term process of improvement and enhancement. In addition to theoretical research, it is also



necessary to strengthen the application research and exploration of improving the employment psychological quality of college students, closely integrating employment psychology with the current healthy development of higher education, and promoting the healthy development of school education.



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APPENDIX

We are conducting research on psychological capital and employment anxiety. The purpose of this questionnaire survey is to understand your current anxiety, psychological capital status, and career decision ability.

For the content of this questionnaire survey, there is no need to fill in your name. We will strictly abide by the principle of confidentiality and will not disclose any other information. Please rest assured to answer. We look forward to your active cooperation, and we deeply appreciate it!

Questionnaire 1: Employment Anxiety Questionnaire for College Graduates

topic	Not at all	A bit	General	Often	Always
1. When you think of employment, you always feel like a big crisis is coming.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Approaching employment, unable to sleep.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Thinking of employment makes me very restless.	1	2	3	4	5
4. When it comes to employment, there's no appetite for food anymore.	1	2	3	4	5
5. When I think of employment, my heart feels heavy like a stone.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Hear others talking about employment and feel flustered.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Always involuntarily associate with negative employment outcomes, making it difficult for oneself to rest assured of the job at hand.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Unable to sleep well due to employment concerns.	1	2	3	4	5

9. When it comes to employment, it's difficult to focus on other things.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am very confused when I think of employment.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am anxious when I think of employment.	1	2	3	4	5
12. When I think of employment, my thinking becomes chaotic.	1	2	3	4	5
13. When I think of employment, I feel uneasy inside.	1	2	3	4	5
14. During my job search and employment period, my body also experienced some abnormalities (such as stomach pain, constipation, getting hot, losing weight, forgetfulness, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
15. The employment issue has made my nerves tense.	1	2	3	4	5
16. As I approach employment, I have become more irritable than before.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Thinking about employment issues, I feel less energetic than before and always feel exhausted	1	2	3	4	5



## Questionnaire 2: Survey on Psychological Capital

	Not at all	A bit	General	Often	Always
1.I believe I can analyze long-term problems and find solutions.	1	2	3	4	5
2.When meeting with the management, I am confident in stating things within my scope of work.	1	2	3	4	5
3.I believe I have contributed to the discussion of the company's strategy.	1	2	3	4	5
4.Within my scope of work or study, I believe I can help set goals.	1	2	3	4	5
5.I believe I can contact people outside of the company or school (such as suppliers, customers) and discuss issues..	1	2	3	4	5
6.I believe I can provide information to a group of colleagues or classmates.	1	2	3	4	5
7.If I find myself facing difficulties during my internship or study, I can come up with many ways to get rid of it.	1	2	3	4	5
8.Currently, I am fully committed to achieving my internship or learning goals.	1	2	3	4	5
9.There are many solutions to any problem.	1	2	3	4	5
10.Currently, I think i can do it that my internship or study has been quite successful.	1	2	3	4	5

11.I can come up with many ways to achieve my current work or study goals	1	2	3	4	5
12.Currently, I am achieving the work or study goals I have set for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
13.When I encounter setbacks during my internship or study, I always quickly recover from them and continue to move forward.	1	2	3	4	5
14.In my internship or study, no matter what difficulties I encounter, I will solve them.	1	2	3	4	5
15.If I have to do this during my internship or study, it can be said that I can also face challenges independently.	1	2	3	4	5
16.I usually handle the pressure of internship work calmly.	1	2	3	4	5
17.Because I have experienced many hardships in the past, now I am able to withstand difficult periods in internship work or study.	1	2	3	4	5
18.In my current internship or study, I feel that I can handle many things simultaneously.	1	2	3	4	5
19.In internship work or study, when encountering uncertain things, I usually hope to get the best results.	1	2	3	4	5

20.For adverse events that occur in internship work or study settings, they are considered temporary and have a solution.	1	2	3	4	5
21.In internship work or study, I am able to face upcoming events with optimism.	1	2	3	4	5
22.I am optimistic about what will happen in my future work.	1	2	3	4	5
23.In my current internship or study, things are developing as I hoped.	1	2	3	4	5
24.When interning or studying, I always believe that 'there is light behind the darkness, there is no need to be pessimistic	1	2	3	4	5

## Questionnaire 3:Survey on Career Decision

	Not at all	A bit	General	Often	Always
1. I have a clear understanding of the talent supply and demand situation and future development direction I want to pursue in my profession/industry	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know what profession/industry I want to pursue and can accurately describe it	1	2	3	4	5
3. I understand the basic situation, future development, and skill requirements of the corresponding profession/industry	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am aware of the general working environment, salary and benefits of the	1	2	3	4	5

general enterprise units in which I want to work in the industry					
5. I will constantly consider my future work issues	1	2	3	4	5
6. My thoughts on what job or profession to pursue in the future are certain	1	2	3	4	5
7. My physical condition is able to cope with the current and future tight work rhythm	1	2	3	4	5
8. Both my friends and I believe that my future plans are completely in line with my own actual situation	1	2	3	4	5
9. In my believe the opinions of others can only broaden my thinking and cannot influence my thoughts	1	2	3	4	5
10. Even if I encounter some difficult problems during the job search process, I can still calmly face and properly solve them	1	2	3	4	5
11. I believe in the career development plan I have determined and always believe in being able to complete it	1	2	3	4	5
12. I can choose a career or job that suits my development	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am willing to communicate with others and carefully listen to their opinions and experiences	1	2	3	4	5
14. I usually carefully consider the opinions and suggestions of others, but	1	2	3	4	5

the final decision is still made by myself					
15. I try my best to choose jobs related to my strengths	1	2	3	4	5
16. Even when I am discouraged, I still persist in striving for my career goals	1	2	3	4	5
17. In order to achieve my career goals, I know what I am willing or unwilling to lose	1	2	3	4	5
18. When making career choices, I usually need to combine my interests with the practical needs of my career	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am very sure what kind of company, enterprise, or unit is suitable for me	1	2	3	4	5
20. I know what kind of job the knowledge and abilities I possess are suitable for	1	2	3	4	5
21. I have a clear understanding of my future plans and career direction	1	2	3	4	5
22. I always adhere to my ideals and am not influenced by the outside world	1	2	3	4	5
23. I understand the types of professions related to my major	1	2	3	4	5
24. I am confident in choosing a career or job that aligns with my abilities	1	2	3	4	5

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