



The Study on the Influencing Factors of College Students' Returning Hometown for Employment

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Abstract. Employment is the greatest livelihood. It has always been one of the issue of concern for the country and society. This paper uses Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, prospect theory, and social support theory as theoretical foundations to analyze the influencing factors of college students' return-to-hometown employment through empirical investigation, and provides suggestions for local governments to attract and retain talents from the perspective of influencing factors. The study found that currently, college students have a strong willingness to return to their hometowns for employment, and their choices are related to subjective and objective factors which are unified. Subjective factors include career choice concepts and personal needs, while objective factors include hometown type, social evaluation, and policies. Economic factors and personal needs are important factors affecting college students' return-to-hometown employment.

Keywords: College Students, Returning Hometown For Employment Willingness, Influencing Factors

1 Introduction

In the era of the knowledge economy, the improvement of people's average cultural level and the reduction of job opportunities have led to an increasingly difficult social situation.[1] "Employment is the biggest livelihood issue." How to alleviate the problem of college students' employment difficulties has attracted widespread attention in today's society. Regional imbalanced development, excessive saturation of talents in large cities, and talent shortages in small towns and rural areas have brought breakthroughs to solve the problem of employment.[2] Analyzing the employment pressure and location selection faced by graduates, this paper focuses on the influencing factors of college students' returning hometown for employment, providing suggestions for local governments to attract and retain talents. [3]

2 Literature review

It has been shown that the return-to-hometown employment of college students has various influences that collectively drive graduates' employment choices. Scholars like Naveed et al. have found that labor mobility is crucial in establishing local employment foundations, with labor inflow being essential for job opportunities in secondary areas. [4] Houle and Warner discovered an increasing trend of young people returning to their hometowns after a few years of independence, primarily due to academic advancement and labor market development. [5] Regarding the research methodology for this study, domestic scholars have analyzed the issue of college students' employment status from the perspectives of students themselves, employment environment, and external factors. Guo Bingchun, as a counselor, has dealt with and explored student employment issues and suggests helping college students achieve higher-quality employment through four aspects: ideology, planning, guidance, and practice. [6] This study combines the results of academic research and teaching practice to analyze the influencing factors of college students' return-to-hometown employment from both subjective and objective perspectives.

3 Design of the questionnaire

3.1 Test of the questionnaire

This study uses a questionnaire survey as the main research method. Based on the research content, excellent questionnaire design cases were referenced, and the questionnaire was designed based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, prospect theory, and social support theory. The questionnaire collects information from respondents on the influencing factors of returning hometown for employment from three aspects: basic personal information, employment willingness, and returning hometown for employment willingness. The questionnaire has good content validity with a KMO value of 0.944, which is close to 1. The significance of Bartlett's sphericity test is less than 0.05, indicating that the questionnaire has good structural validity and that there is a correlation between variables suitable for factor analysis. The third part of the questionnaire was imported into SPSS 25.0 for reliability analysis, and the reliability coefficient was 0.942, which is greater than 0.7, indicating that each item in the scale has high consistency and reliability.

3.2 Distribution of questionnaires and sample distribution

This study aims to investigate the real feelings of college students towards employment and provide targeted suggestions for their employment. The survey questionnaire was distributed to college students and recent graduates nationwide, and the data collection was conducted from January 28, 2023, to March 1, 2023. A total of 313 questionnaires were collected, with a response rate of 96.2%, after excluding invalid questionnaires.

4 Data analysis

4.1 Basic Characteristics of the Sample

The basic characteristics of the sample were collected in terms of gender, hometown, education level, grade level, university type, and major. In Table 1 provides a detailed description of further categorization and the percentage of data for the aforementioned six aspects.

Table 1. Basic Characteristics of the Sample

Basic Characteristics of the Sample					
<u>Gender</u>		<u>Hometown</u>			
Male	101 (3.55%)	Provincial capital/direct-controlled municipality		158 (52.49%)	
Female	200 (66.45%)	Prefecture-level city		41 (13.62%)	
		County-level city		45 (14.95%)	
		Town and rural areas		57 (18.94%)	
<u>Grade</u>		<u>Education</u>			
Fourth grade and above	55 (51.50%)	Bachelor's degree		264 (87.71%)	
Third grade	61 (20.27%)	Master's degree		23 (7.64%)	
Second grade	41 (13.62%)	Associate degree		11 (3.65%)	
Graduated	34 (11.30%)	Doctoral degree		3 (1%)	
First grade	10 (3.32%)				
<u>Major Type</u>					
Management and Economics	108 (35.88%)	Humanities and Law		68 (22.59%)	
Science and Engineering	61 (20.27%)	Medical	17 (5.65%)	Arts	17 (5.65%)
Normal	15 (4.98%)	Other	9 (2.99%)	Agriculture and Forestry	6 (1.99%)

4.2 Subjective Factors Analysis

Career Choice.

According to the survey, 63.12% of respondents expressed a willingness to return to their hometowns for employment, indicating that most students are willing to do so. The factors that students value most when choosing a job, as collected from the questionnaire, are salary and benefits, social security, and development prospects. The majority of university students accept a minimum salary of 4000-6000 yuan and are more willing to go to first- and second-tier cities that meet their salary expectations. Regarding the impact of major on employment, 51.5% of students have an attitude that any job is acceptable regardless of their major, while 36.54% prefer jobs related to their major and only 11.96% refuse jobs that do not match their major. When it comes to choosing an employer, respondents tend towards state-owned enterprises, public institutions, government agencies, foreign-funded or joint ventures with high stability, good benefits and development prospects. [7][8] Therefore, while major and employer

choice do have some influence on returning hometown for employment among university graduates, the impact of job stability and development prospects is even greater than the match between one's major and job position.

Individual Demand

The measurement dimensions of this questionnaire include physiological safety needs, social needs and support, and respect and self-realization needs. By analyzing the relationship between these three dimensions and the choice of returning to hometown for employment, we can determine which dimension or dimensions have a greater impact on the choice of college students to return hometown for employment and what kind of impact it has.

A logistic linear regression model is established to analyze the relationship between the probability of choosing to return hometown for employment (p) and the three dimensions of physiological safety needs, social needs and support, and respect and self-realization needs (x_1, x_2, x_3). In this model:

$$\ln \frac{\hat{P}}{1-\hat{p}} = \hat{b}_0 + \hat{b}_1 \cdot x_1 + \hat{b}_2 \cdot x_2 + \hat{b}_3 \cdot x_3$$

The internal value for those willing to return hometown for employment is 1 while those who are not willing is 0.

Table 2. Omnibus Test of Model Coefficients

		Chi-Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significance
	Step	56.431	3	0.000
Step 1	Block	56.431	3	0.000
	Model	56.431	3	0.000

As shown in Table 2, the likelihood ratio chi-square value corresponding to the "model" in the last row is 56.431 with 3 degrees of freedom. The significance level $\text{Sig.}=0.000<0.05$ indicates that at least one independent variable coefficient in the fitted model is not equal to zero, meaning that the model has statistical significance.

Table 3. Hosmer-Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significance
1	14.925	8	0.061

In Table 3, Hosmer-Lemeshow test shows a significance level of 0.061 which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that the information in current data has been fully extracted and that the logistic model chosen is appropriate with consistent results between two tables and statistical significance exists.

Table 4. Variables

	B	Stand- ard Er- ror	Wald	Degrees of Freedom	Signifi- cance	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval of Exp(B)	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Step1 Dimension of Respect and Self-Act- ualization Needs	1.163	0.341	11.662	1	0.001	3.200	1.641	6.238
Dimension of Physiolog- ical Safety Needs	0.185	0.310	0.359	1	0.549	1.204	0.656	2.208
Dimension of Social Needs and Social Sup- port	-0.003	0.326	0.000	1	0.992	0.997	0.526	1.888
Constant	-3.805	0.820	21.527	1	0.000	0.022		

a. Variables entered in Step 1: Dimension of Respect and Self-Actualization Needs, Dimension of Physiological Safety Needs, Dimension of Social Needs and Social Support.

In Table 4, it can be seen that the significance of the variable of respect and self-realization needs dimension is 0.001, which is less than 0.05, indicating that this variable has significant meaning in the model. The significance of the physiological safety needs dimension data, social needs and social support dimension data is greater than 0.05, indicating that these two dimensions do not have statistical significance.

$\hat{b}_0 = -3.805$ can be represented by a logistic linear regression model as $\hat{b}_1 = 1.163$

where the coefficient of X3 is positive, indicating that the higher the score for respect and self-realization needs dimension, the more willing they are to return to their hometown for employment.

The decision of university students to return to their hometown for employment is related to their ability to utilize personal skills, achieve personal ideals and aspirations, urban development, job prospects and other factors related to respect and self-realization needs dimension. As people's basic living needs have been met, they pursue higher-level needs. After graduation, university students hope to satisfy their higher-level needs through their high education level. They compare risk factors and analyze the location of employment settlement choices in order to achieve personal ideals and obtain a better life. Therefore, respect and self-realization dimensions are important factors affecting university students' decision to return hometown for employment.

4.3 Objective Factors Analysis

Social Evaluation

For social evaluation, most of the respondents surveyed did not have biased thoughts such as "returning to hometown for employment means lack of ability". [9] Based on this, it is analyzed whether social evaluation is a factor affecting university students' return-to-hometown employment.

Table 5. Chi-square test of Social Evaluation and Choices of Returning for Employment

	Value	Degrees of Freedom	Asymptotic Significance (Two-tailed)	Exact Significance (Two-tailed)	Exact Significance (One-tailed)
Pearson chi-square	4.386 ^a	1	0.036		
Continuity correction ^b	3.805	1	0.051		
Likelihood ratio	4.292	1	0.038		
Fisher's exact test				0.044	0.026
Linear correlation	4.371	1	0.037		
Effective sample size	301				

a. α . 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 24.71.

b. Counting is done only for 2x2 table.

According to the result of Pearson chi-square test in Table 5, the significance of 0.036 is less than 0.05, indicating that there is a correlation between social evaluation and return-to-hometown employment.

Social evaluation has an impact on the choice of returning to hometown for employment. In areas without negative evaluation, the number of people willing to return to hometown for employment is greater than those who are not willing; in areas affected by negative social evaluation, there is not much difference between the number of people willing and not willing to return to hometown for employment. This indicates that social evaluation has a certain impact on university students' decision to return hometown for employment.

Policy Types

Through questionnaire survey data analysis, it is found that policy support and subsidy cases for returning to hometown employment account for 44.3%, which is the most important factor affecting university students' decision to return hometown for employment. The second most important factor is the belief that their professional skills can bring great impact on their hometown, accounting for 20.6%. In addition, the influence

of friends who have returned to hometown for employment and successful entrepreneurs who have returned to hometown for employment and started businesses accounts for 16.0% and 14.4%, respectively. Furthermore, specific policy types were proposed based on the question "What policies do you hope to enjoy when returning to your hometown for employment?" in order to discover the most important policy factors affecting university students' decision to return hometown for employment through frequency of selection. It was found that the two most important factors were employment subsidy policies and housing subsidy policies, both of which are economic factors that attract or retain talents in the form of economic subsidies. The essence of these two policy factors is actually similar to salary and welfare factors.

5 Conclusions

According to the analysis of questionnaire survey results, it can be concluded that currently, university students have a strong willingness to return to their hometown for employment. The choice of returning to hometown for employment is related to many factors, among which economic factors and personal needs have a greater impact. Based on the expectations of university students and the reality of the situation, they choose their own work location. At the individual, university and government levels, suggestions are provided for local governments to attract and retain talents. From an individual perspective, one should clarify the actual situation and not be affected by negative social evaluations. When facing setbacks and difficulties in returning hometown for entrepreneurship, one should improve their ability to think from others' perspectives and combine the latest social hot issues with professional knowledge to improve problem-solving efficiency.[10] For universities, they can change individual concepts through student employment guidance and ideological education so that university students can have a clearer understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of various types of cities as well as their own characteristics.[11][12] From the perspective of government policy support, it is necessary to establish a support mechanism for diversified career choices for university students so that they can move smoothly within the region.[13] In response to the needs of university students, accurate services should be provided for those who return home for employment; enterprises and social organizations should be guided to participate in actions related to university students' return-to-hometown employment and entrepreneurship through policy support.[14][15]

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