

# Research on the relationship between Self-compassion and Employment Pressure of College Graduates

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## Abstract

**With the continuous enrollment expansion of colleges and universities, higher education began to become popular. With the increasing number of graduates year by year, employment related topics have become one of the key issues concerned by the society and graduates. In addition, due to the impact of the epidemic, the number of overseas students returning home has increased, which also makes graduates face a more severe employment situation and make graduates suffer multiple employment pressures. This paper explores the relationship between self-compassion and employment pressure, and finds that the new concept of self-compassion has a significant negative impact on employment pressure, that is, improving graduates' self-compassion level can reduce their own employment pressure. On this basis, this paper puts forward some suggestions to improve the level of self-compassion, such as adding psychological courses and setting up psychological assistance groups, in order to alleviate the employment pressure of graduates and help graduates face the severe employment situation with a better attitude.**

## Keywords

**College graduates; Self-compassion; Employment pressure.**

## 1. Problem posing and Research hypothesis

Employment is the focus of the state and society, especially for college students, employment related topics are one of the most concerned problems of college students. In early 2020, novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak suddenly caused a great impact on the social economy, and also affected the normal employment, life and learning rhythm of the graduates in universities. In this situation, graduates are required to adjust their psychology and avoid affecting their mental health. Therefore, graduates should relax their mentality and take a positive attitude to face the employment pressure in the current period, and self-compassion, as an effective personal trait for college students to deal with the pressure, has become a topic of concern for researchers.

Self-compassion was first proposed by Neff, which means tolerance and understanding of oneself in the case of pain or failure, describes the friendly and caring attitude towards oneself in the face of failure or pain, and the desire to alleviate his pain<sup>[1]</sup>. Singer and others believe that compassion is the emotion that an individual experiences when he is concerned about another person's experience<sup>[2]</sup>, and self-compassion is compassion for himself. Its composition includes three parts: self-friendliness, universal sexuality and mindfulness<sup>[3]</sup>. Self-friendliness refers to treating yourself in a way of understanding and tolerance when facing your own shortcomings and shortcomings; Universal sexuality is to make people realize that everyone will experience failure and frustration, and can't look at their own problems in isolation; Mindfulness means feeling pain in a peaceful way, not paying too much attention to it. As a new self-concept, self-compassion can regulate individual emotions, improve individual psychological well-being, and play a positive role in mental health. Studies have found that there is a negative correlation

between self-compassion and stress<sup>[4-5]</sup>.As one of the most important predictors of stress<sup>[6]</sup>, self-compassion can not only reduce the relationship between job stress and job burnout and improve the quality of life<sup>[7]</sup>, but also regulate the relationship between academic expectation pressure and well-being<sup>[8]</sup>.In addition, Neff believes that individuals with high self-compassion will have better self feeling, higher self-worth and self-esteem because they are more friendly to themselves and more receptive to themselves<sup>[9]</sup>.Accordingly, the following assumptions are put forward: the self-compassion of fresh graduates has a significant negative impact on employment pressure.

## 2. Research Actuality

Self-compassion has a positive contribution to mental health, which has attracted more and more attention of researchers. Some studies have found that there is a negative correlation between self-compassion and stress (Roselina&Nurul,2019)<sup>[10]</sup>, and the intervention of self-compassion can alleviate the negative impact of individual stress and reduce the stress of college students (Finlay-Jones et al., 2017)<sup>[11]</sup>. As one of the most important predictors of stress, self-compassion can not only alleviate the impact of student stress on school burnout (Thiti et al., 2020)<sup>[12]</sup>, improve the quality of life (Vinayak et al., 2020)<sup>[13]</sup>, but also regulate the relationship between academic expectation stress and well-being (Amy et al.,2020)<sup>[14]</sup>.As a new self-concept, self-compassion started late in China compared with foreign countries. Domestic researchers also believe that self-compassion can regulate individual emotions, improve individual psychological well-being, and play a positive role in mental health. Self-compassion can not only significantly improve college students' subjective well-being and promote altruistic behavior (Zou,2018)<sup>[15]</sup>, but also alleviate negative emotions caused by psychological stress (Luo,2017)<sup>[16]</sup>.

To sum up, there are few studies in foreign countries that take employment pressure as a separate subject, generally on work pressure, occupational pressure, college students' life pressure and academic pressure, and there are few studies on the relationship between self-compassion and employment pressure.However, the domestic research on self-compassion is still in its infancy, and there is a lack of research on self-compassion and stress. Most of them are to explore the relationship between self-compassion and psychological symptoms such as anxiety, depression, burnout and mental health.In terms of stress, most of the studies focus on the relationship between self-compassion and occupational stress, and pay less attention to the relationship between self-compassion and employment pressure. As one of the causes of negative psychological symptoms, employment pressure is the pressure felt by students in the employment situation. Its essence is similar to occupational pressure. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the relationship between College Students' self-compassion and employment pressure, so as to provide a new perspective for alleviating college students' employment pressure.

## 3. Research Method

### 3.1. Research Object

Using random sampling method, fresh graduates from four ordinary colleges and universities in southern Sichuan are selected as the research object.A total of 437 questionnaires were collected, including 241 male graduates, accounting for 55.1%, and 196 female graduates, accounting for 44.9%; and there are 217 fresh graduates majoring in humanities and social sciences, accounting for 49.7%, and 220 fresh graduates majoring in science and engineering, accounting for 50.3%.

### 3.2. Research Tool

According to the actual situation and the simplicity of the research, the questionnaire of scholars Ying Wang(2014) and Yuhong Chen(2005)<sup>[17-18]</sup> was revised to a certain extent by fully studying the literature. The employment pressure was divided into two parts: internal factors and external factors. The internal factors included five questions such as salary and expectation, and the external factors included three questions such as employment environment and employment situation.

The self-compassion questionnaire mainly draws on the scale<sup>[19]</sup> of Chenshan Lei (2014), and makes appropriate adjustments according to the research purpose and the results of data analysis. The scale consists of three parts: self-friendliness, universal sexuality and mindfulness.

## 4. Research Results

### 4.1. Common Method Deviation Test

Harman single factor test is used to test the common method deviation. The results show that the characteristic root of five factors is greater than 1, and the first factor can only explain 16.977% of the total variance and less than 40% of the critical standard. Therefore, there is no serious problem of common method deviation<sup>[20]</sup>.

### 4.2. Descriptive Statistics

The research conducted descriptive statistical analysis on the data collected from the formal survey to understand the basic situation of the survey samples. It can be seen from the statistical results that the proportion of male fresh graduates is 55.1% and that of female fresh graduates is 44.9%; Fresh graduates majoring in Humanities and Social Sciences accounted for 49.7%, and fresh graduates majoring in science and engineering accounted for 50.3%; The proportion of fresh graduates whose families live in cities (towns) is 38.7%, and the proportion of fresh graduates in rural areas is 61.3%; Among them, the proportion of fresh graduates with only one child is 38.0%, and the proportion of fresh graduates without only one child is 62.0%.According to the descriptive statistical analysis of the sample, it basically ensures that the proportion of gender and professional nature of the respondents is reasonable, and the next analysis can be carried out.

### 4.3. Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the correlation between dimensions and variables. The correlation test results show that there is a significant negative impact between fresh graduates' employment pressure and self-compassion, and the correlation is -0.477.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

From the analysis of correlation results, it can be seen that the self-compassion of fresh graduates has a significant negative impact on employment pressure. Some researchers have found that self-compassion can alleviate the negative effects caused by individual pressure<sup>[21-22]</sup> and reduce the pressure of college students<sup>[23]</sup>.When facing the new stage of life, graduates may have negative emotions due to the influence of social and their own factors. If they do not adjust in time, they will indulge in the pressure situation for a long time, resulting in the non smooth employment and the impact on their mental health. Therefore, according to the conclusion of this study, we can reduce the employment pressure by improving their degree of self-compassion. The concept of self-compassion construction emphasizes to treat the pressure and difficulties faced by oneself with a peaceful and friendly attitude, emphasize the connection with the world, organization and group, avoid the sense of isolation, and separate individuals from negative emotions, so as to reduce the impact of pressure on their negative emotions.

In conclusion, according to the results of this study, the higher the level of self-compassion of graduates, the lower the degree of employment pressure they feel, and there is a significant negative correlation between them. Therefore, doing a good job in the mental health education of fresh graduates and improving the self-compassion level of fresh graduates can alleviate the employment pressure of fresh graduates. On the one hand, the school can offer relevant mental health courses to enable graduates to understand their psychological status, encourage them to adjust themselves, and provide them with psychological assistance to help them alleviate the pressure of employment by telling them psychological knowledge and relevant psychological skills; On the other hand, the school should set up a special psychological pressure assistance group for graduates in the employment guidance group to provide special psychological assistance for graduates who can not adjust their pressure by themselves, alleviate their own pressure through the help of teachers, and better face the difficulties encountered in the process of employment. In addition, the school can also provide psychological activities for graduates, attract students' participation with interesting activities, promote the dissemination of psychological knowledge, and cooperate with intervention projects such as Tai Chi and Yoga to improve the level of self-compassion of graduates. In the process of psychological counseling for graduates, self-compassion intervention techniques such as mindfulness self-compassion intervention training and compassion focus therapy are supplemented to reduce the employment pressure of graduates in a scientific way. Pay attention to the mental health education of fresh graduates, improve their self-compassion, reduce the employment pressure of fresh graduates, and make graduates face employment with a better attitude.

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