

## EXPLORE THE AFFECTING FACTORS OF COLLEGE GRADUATES' ENTREPRENEURIAL CHOICE GOALS

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### ABSTRACT

This paper mainly explores which factors affect the entrepreneurial choice goals of college graduates and how to affect the entrepreneurial choice goals. A mixed research method combining quantitative research and qualitative research will be adopted in this paper. Through the research, it will be found that the factors affecting the entrepreneurial choice goals include entrepreneurial learning experience, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial outcome expectation and entrepreneurial environment

**Keywords:** Influencing factor, College graduate, Entrepreneurial choice goals

### INTRODUCTION

The number of college graduates in China is expected to reach 12.22 million in 2025, an increase of 430,000 over 2024 (Han Chen,2024). If these numbers are added to those who have returned from overseas studies, as well as previous unemployed graduates, the number of college graduates seeking jobs is even larger. College graduates are facing fierce competition for jobs. However, the knowledge and experience of some college graduates cannot adapt to the upgrading of industries.

Despite the end of the COVID-19 epidemic, China's economic recovery has been slow and job opportunities have been reduced. The reasons for this phenomenon are as follows: First, the economies of all countries are facing the dilemma of the Great Depression. Countries are importing fewer Chinese goods. Second, there is a trade dispute between China and the United States. The United States has raised import tariffs on Chinese goods, and Chinese export profits have fallen. Third, China's domestic consumer demand is sluggish, enterprises are operating at a low rate and hiring needs are reduced.

The Chinese government is promoting the transformation and construction of the innovation system and striving to build an innovation-driven economic development model. The development trend of the future economy is the development of high-end, intelligent and green manufacturing industry, and the high integration of modern service industry with advanced manufacturing industry and modern agriculture.

In October 2021, the Chinese government issued the Guiding Opinions on Further Supporting College Students' Innovation and Entrepreneurship, which clearly stated that "deepening mass entrepreneurship and innovation is an important support for further implementing the innovation-driven development strategy, and college students are the new force of mass entrepreneurship and innovation, and supporting college students' innovation and entrepreneurship is of great significance." (Wei Shu guang & Wu Keyu,2021). Colleges have carried out major reforms in curriculum design, teaching mode, teacher level and practice platform. It is intended to encourage college graduates to find employment through entrepreneurship.

## OBJECTIVE

1. To construct a model that affects graduates' entrepreneurial choice goals.
2. To analyze the factors that affect graduates' entrepreneurial choice goals.

## METHODOLOGY

This research plan adopts a design scheme combining quantitative research and qualitative research to test the constructed structural equation model and explain the relationship between variables. This part mainly includes: research instrument, population and sample, data collection, and data analysis and so on.

### 3.1 Supporting theory

This paper will be guided by social cognitive occupational theory. This theory is a theoretical perspective that integrates personal and environmental factors with occupational processes (Yuan Xia, 2020). According to this theory, self-efficacy, outcome expectation and personal goal constitute the main structural mechanism of individuals in the career decision-making process (Lent, R.W., Brown, S.D. & Hackett, G., 1994). This theory explained that career interests, individual internal and objective environmental factors influenced the process of setting career goals and developing professional behaviors (R.W., Brown, S.D. & Hackett, G., 1994).

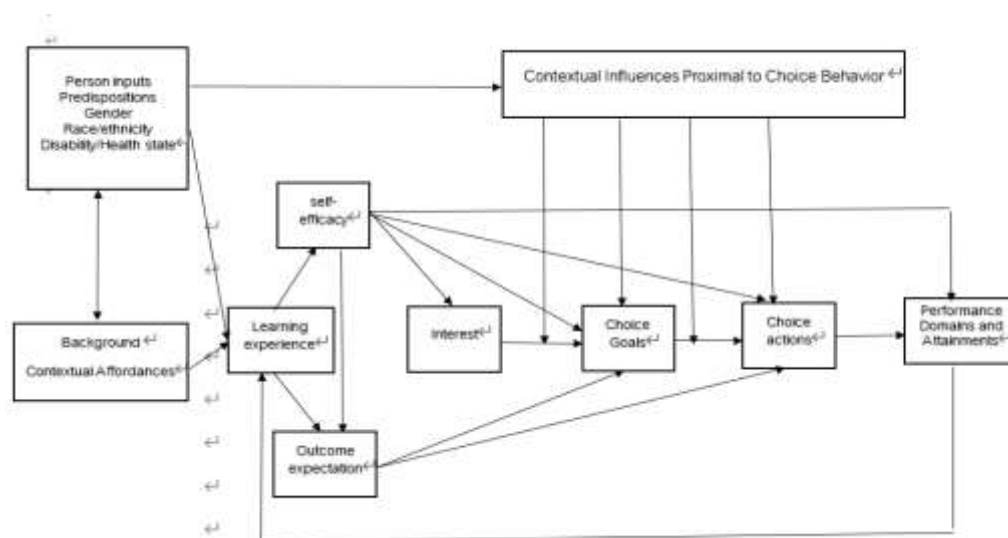


Figure 1: Structural equation model of SCCT (Lent, R.W., Brown, S.D. & Hackett, G., 1994)

### 3.2 Research procedure

Step 1: Construct structural equation model and hypothesis. On the basis of literature review, this paper will use variables to construct models and hypotheses.

Step 2: Test the constructed equation model. The paper plans to collect sample data through online questionnaire survey and use quantitative research methods to test the model.

Step 3: Explain the relationship between variables. The paper plans to collect sample data through offline in-depth interviews, and use qualitative research methods to explain the relationship between variables.

Step 4: Conclusion and prospect. This paper will summarize the testing of the model and hypothesis, and summarize the relationship between variables. At the same time, suggestions for future research are given.

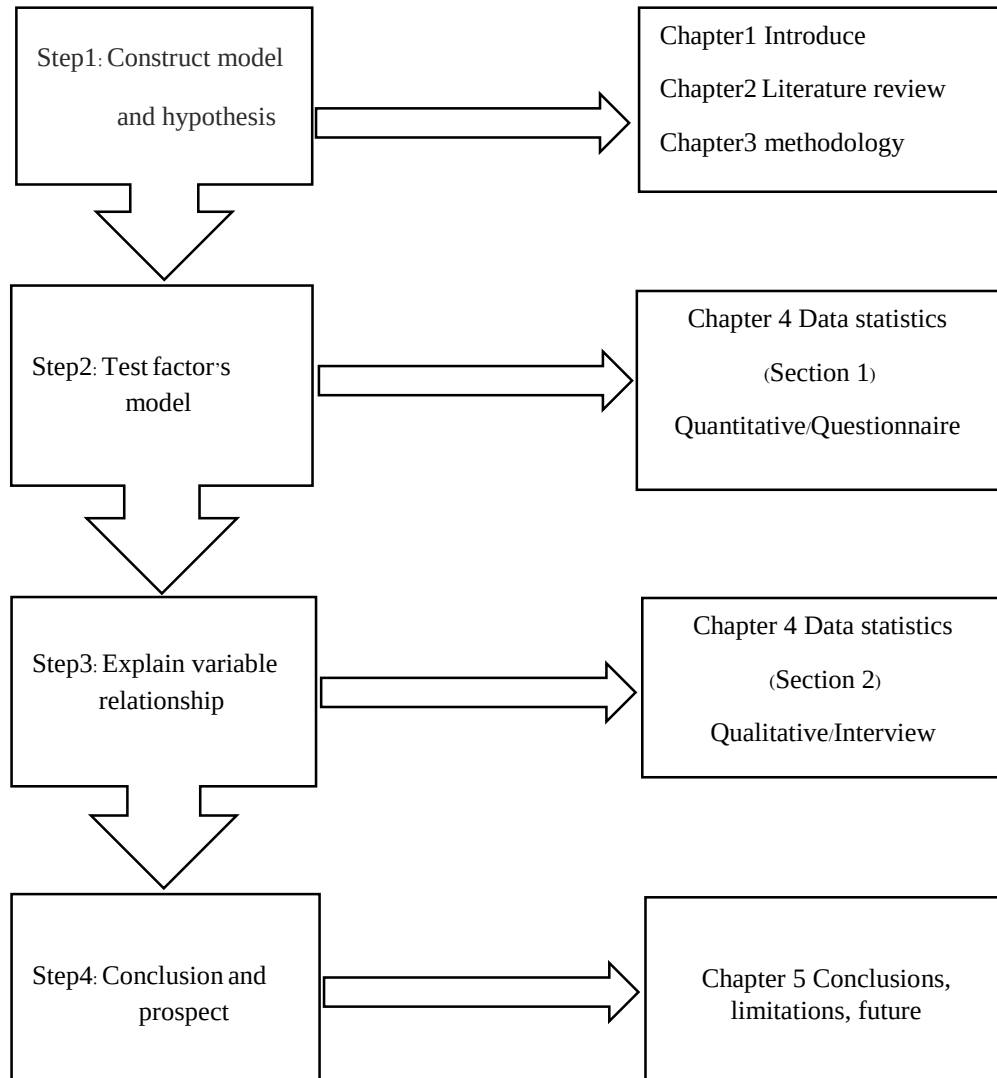


**Figure 2 : The research procedure diagram**

### 3.3 Quantitative methodological approach

The paper plans to use China's "Wenjuanxing" software to conduct an online questionnaire survey and collect sample data. This research will conduct the Index of item-objective congruence Test (IOC) on the questionnaire. IOC is a procedure used in test development for evaluating content validity at the item development stage (Ronna C. Turner & Laurie Carlson, 2003). This test will invite 7 experts to rate the survey questions item by item. The seven experts must be familiar with entrepreneurship policy, entrepreneurship education, and entrepreneurship market and so on. Therefore, the sample data collected by the questionnaire will be valuable and can be applied to the data collection of graduates. To order to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, a small sample pre-test will be conducted before the formal investigation. The small sample test plan adopts online questionnaire to collect 30 sample questionnaire data.

### Population and Sample size

Data for quantitative research will be collected from a group of colleges in a third-tier city in China. The group of college graduates is the subject of collection. When evaluating the sample size, this paper will use Yamane's formula for calculation (Taro Yamane, 1967). The error margin of the sample size will be controlled within 5%. According to the formula, the sample size of the online questionnaire is about 400.

### Data collation and analysis

After the sample collection is completed, the research will sort out the data, including three aspects: data pre-processing (data review, data sorting and data interpolation), data grouping and data presentation.

In this research, Smart PLS software will be used for quantitative data analysis. When Smart PLS is used for data analysis, can be obtained a variety of result indicators, these indicators can be used to verify the reliability and validity of the model and explain the relationship between variables. Cronbach's alpha(Cronbach's  $\alpha$ )、Average Variance Extracted (AVE)、Coefficient of Determination( $R^2$ )、Predictive Relevance( $Q^2$ ) and Effect Size( $f^2$ ) will be involved in this paper. These indicators are very important in PLS-SEM analysis, and they help this study evaluate the reliability, validity, explanatory power and predictive power of the model.

### 3.4 Qualitative Methodological Approach

This research plan adopts qualitative methods to conduct in-depth interviews, aiming to obtain detailed and rich information and collect useful data through in-depth interviews. Data collected from in-depth interviews are used to explain how independent and mediating variables affect dependent variables.

### Population and Sample size

This research plans to conduct in-depth interviews with 20-40 college graduates randomly selected from a group of universities in a third-tier city in China, with a moderate proportion of male and female students. The college graduates will major in liberal arts, science and medicine. The diversity of specialties is more conducive to the representation of data.

### Data collation and analysis

At the time of data collation, samples are classified, interpreted, and given names. Through numerical processing, it is convenient to analyze and summarize the data. During the classification process, this study will ensure that the classification process used adequately reflects the characteristics of the sample study and is able to support the analysis performed.

This research plans to use Nvivo software for qualitative analysis of data samples in order to process non-data materials such as text, pictures, audio and video. Through analysis of the data law, the relationship between the data is captured, and the correlation between the variables is found.

## 4.RESULTS

From step 1 of figure 1: the structural equation model of this paper is constructed. The structural equation model has a total of five variables and a total of 15 variable dimensions.

**Table 1: Variables and dimensions of the model**

| No. | Variable                            | Variable dimension                                                             |
|-----|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Entrepreneurial learning experience | Achievement performance、Vicarious learning、Social persuasion、Emotional arousal |

|   |                                     |                                                                                                                 |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | Entrepreneurial self-efficacy       | Innovation efficacy、Risk-taking efficacy、Opportunity identification efficacy、Relationship coordination efficacy |
| 3 | Entrepreneurial outcome expectation | Material outcome expectation、Social outcome expectation                                                         |
| 4 | Entrepreneurial environment         | Government policy、Entrepreneurship education、Business Culture                                                   |
| 5 | Entrepreneurial choice goals        | Entrepreneurial direction、Entrepreneurial persistence                                                           |

From step 2 of figure 1: Structural equation models will be tested. The fitting degree of the structural equation model is checked, and the prediction results are in agreement with the actual situation. The fitting degree of the model is verified. This part of the test is mainly based on the analysis of the sample data collected by the questionnaire.

From step 3 of figure 1: Explain the relationship between variables. Through the collation and analysis of the sample data obtained in the in-depth interview, the regularity and core points of the data can be found according to the characteristics of the data, so as to understand the correlation between variables.

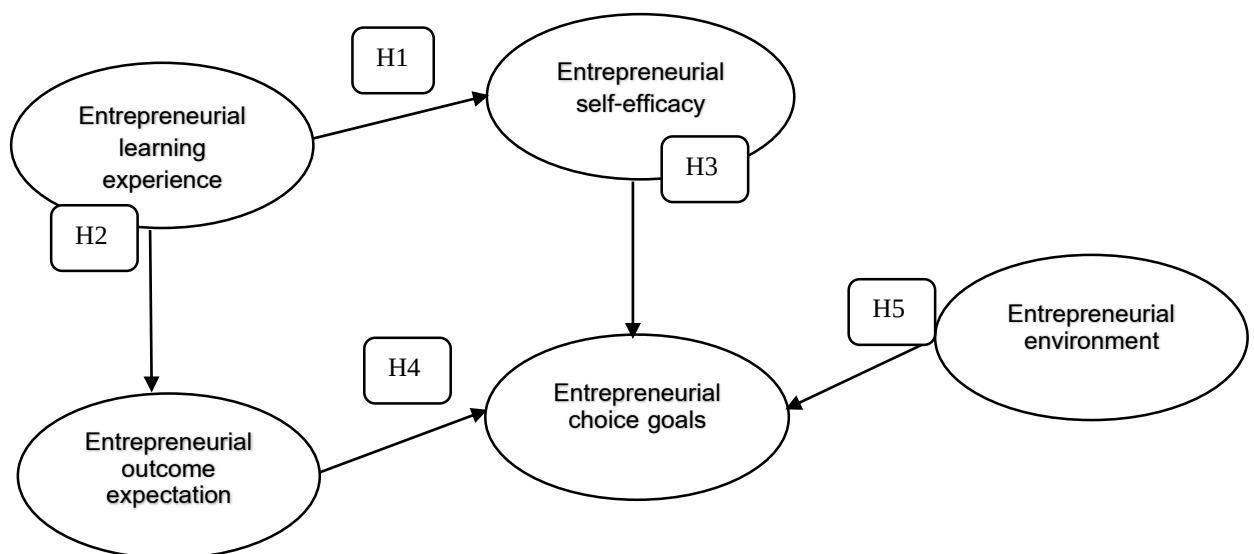


**Figure 3: The variable relationship that affects entrepreneurial choice goals**

Qualitative analysis will demonstrate and explain the relationship between variables:

1. The hypothesis that entrepreneurial learning experience affects entrepreneurial self-efficacy is valid.
2. The hypothesis that entrepreneurial learning experience affects entrepreneurial outcome expectation is valid.
3. The hypothesis that entrepreneurial self-efficacy affects entrepreneurial choice goals is valid.

4. The hypothesis that entrepreneurial outcome expectation affects entrepreneurial choice goals is valid.

5. The hypothesis that entrepreneurial environment affects the entrepreneurial choice goals is valid.

### CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

In this paper, the structural equation model will be constructed through literature review. The sample data will be collected by online questionnaire survey, and the fitting degree of structural equation model will be verified by quantitative analysis. The test results are in good agreement with the actual situation. The established research hypothesis will be also confirmed in the analysis of sample data. The sample data obtained through the in-depth interview will clearly explain how various variables affect the entrepreneurial choice goals. The future research direction should be based on the factors that affect the choice of entrepreneurial goals, and actively explore how to stimulate the entrepreneurial enthusiasm of college graduates and guide them to plan the choice of entrepreneurial goals.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for invaluable help throughout this research. Special thanks to my mentor, Dr Chalermopol Tapsai, for his patient and careful guidance. He made me feel the scholars' piety and adherence to research as well as the tolerance and support for researchers who have just entered the field. There are more heavy research tasks in the future, and I will continue to humbly consult my mentor and classmates. I will try my best to complete the scientific research task.

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