

Delayed Employment Among College Students in Guangdong – Taking Shenzhen University as an Example

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Abstract: Changes in social structure and macro-environment have gradually made “delayed employment” a key area of social concern. This paper assumes the college students from Shenzhen University as research subjects, conducts a special research on delayed employment, explores the employment needs and status quo of college students, analyzes the causes and results of this phenomenon, as well as provides students with a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of employment. This paper also aims to increase the employment rate of graduates, enable reasonable allocation and management of human resources, as well as improve the quality of employment in the society.

Keywords: Delayed employment; Graduates; Employment policy

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1. Research background

In recent years, the rapid development of the market economy and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on social labor factors and structure have highlighted the employment problem of college graduates. Delayed employment is becoming more and more common. This phenomenon is caused by bidirectional influence of social structure and macro-environmental changes, especially the COVID-19 pandemic. Although many graduates are actively applying for jobs, the proportion of graduates who choose to delay their employment is also increasing at a steady pace. Promoting employment, especially the employment of college graduates, is an important guarantee for maintaining a sustained and healthy economic development as well as social stability. A reasonable solution to this phenomenon can play a positive role in stabilizing the social order and improving the social structure.

2. Theoretical basis

First, the domestic research on the status quo of delayed employment mainly focuses on four aspects: employment demand, employment platform construction, employment psychology, and employment subject. Liu Yuwen, a scholar, believes that learning the changes of market rules is an effective measure to

solve this problem. Lan Jundong, yet another scholar, proposes to apply big data and the internet to build an employment guidance platform to promote information modernization as a countermeasure for this phenomenon.

3. Empirical research

The respondents of this survey include current students and graduates from Shenzhen University. This survey takes the students facing “delayed employment” as subjects. A total of 485 students participated in the online questionnaire survey. The composition of the respondents is as follows: 263 male respondents, accounting for 54.23 %, and 222 female respondents, accounting for 45.77%; 472 undergraduates, accounting for 97.32%, 9 postgraduates, accounting for 1.86%, and the other 4, accounting for 0.82%; 110 freshmen, accounting for 22.68%, 96 sophomores, accounting for 19.79%, 93 juniors, accounting for 19.18%, 105 seniors, accounting for 21.65%, and 81 previous graduates, accounting for 16.7%. From the above, the number of respondents for each grade is relatively even.

3.1. Analysis of the importance of each influencing factor

The respondents’ opinion about the suggestions and measures for delayed employment are shown in **Table 1**. It can be seen that the response rates and penetration rates for the cultivation of students’ personal comprehensive ability and the clarification of individual future career plans are relatively high.

Table 1. Summary of response rates and penetration rates

Item	Response		
	n	Response rate	Penetration rate (n = 485)
Cultivate students’ personal comprehensive ability	414	24.38%	85.36%
Clarify individual future career plan	406	23.91%	83.71%
Establish correct employment attitude	329	19.38%	67.84%
Change the traditional concept of employment	188	11.07%	38.76%
Improve social employment environment	335	19.73%	69.07%
Others	26	1.53%	5.36%
Total	1698	100%	350.10%

3.2. Impact analysis

3.2.1. Positive impact

It can be seen from **Table 2** that the respondents believe that delayed employment has certain positive impacts. The scores were 4.42, 4.32, and 4.34, all of which are above 4 points, regardless of the total score or the average in a balanced manner.

Table 2. Positive impact of delayed employment

Impact	N	Total	Mean value	Standard deviation
Provide job seekers more time and space for improvement	485	2144	4.42	1.268
Conducive to job seekers to clarify the direction of employment	485	2096	4.32	1.292
Promote the rationalization and diversification of social career selection concepts	485	2107	4.34	1.248

3.2.2. Negative impact

Table 3 shows that the respondents believe that delayed employment will not result in the development of a social environment of “loving ease and hating work.” The score was 3.97, which is less than 4 points. They also believe that delayed employment would cause the ability of job seekers to no longer meet the social demand and would bring heavy economic burden to the family and society.

Table 3. Negative impact of delayed employment

Impact	N	total	Mean value	Standard deviation
Develop a social environment of “loving ease and hating work”	485	1927	3.97	1.319
The ability of job seekers no longer meet the social demand	485	2071	4.27	1.248
Brings heavy economic burden to the family and society	485	2097	4.32	1.245

4. Discussion

This paper investigates delayed employment from three aspects: its status quo, causes, and impact.

First of all, in consideration of the status quo of delayed employment by analyzing the survey results, the ratio of those with delayed employment to those without delayed employment was 1:2, showing that the phenomenon has become more common. Through the survey, it was found that the phenomenon of delayed employment is not significantly related to gender. However, it was expected that the rate of delayed employment among seniors who face employment pressure would be higher than that of other grades, and the rate of support for delayed employment would also be higher among seniors compared to other grades and those who have graduated. In terms of career choices, those who supported delayed employment in this research had the tendency to choose to continue with postgraduate studies or become civil servants or permanent staffs.

Secondly, by analyzing the factors influencing college students’ choice for delayed employment, it was found that the cause for delayed employment is mainly reflected in three aspects: professional mismatch; inadequate employment guidance and employment practices at school; family members support and no employment pressure from the family.

Finally, the impact of “delayed employment” has two sides. On the one hand, it brings negative impact, where college students’ ability can no longer meet the social demand; in addition, there is heavy economic burden to the family and society. On the other hand, its positive impact is that it is conducive to job seekers in having a clear direction of employment and it promotes the rationalization as well as diversification of social career selection concepts. The impact of delayed employment cannot be merely compared but rather, it should be comprehensively analyzed.

5. Countermeasures

5.1. National level

There may be structural contradictions in the employment of graduates, including regional structure and professional structure, which need macro-adjustment and guidance from national policies to promote employment balance in the eastern, central, and western regions. Second, the society needs to be guided to establish a correct view on academic qualifications; the concept of only valuing academic qualifications should be erased, while the concept of “skills” in employment should be established. The state should also implement policy guidance for the improvement of professional skills among graduates, support innovation policies, promote policies to develop broader and deeper, broaden new employment channels, as well as provide better materials and policy guarantees.

5.2. University level

Colleges should improve the employment mechanism of students on the basis of fully integrating resources. The first is enrollment expansion. It is necessary to expand the scale of enrollment for postgraduates and the upgrading to undergraduate level as well as promote the expansion of enrollment for a second bachelor's degree. The second is the enhancement of employment guidance. It is imperative to carry out various forms of employment guidance and increase the influence of employment guidance courses on students. Third, in terms of employment psychology, a correct outlook on employment and career choices should be cultivated among college students to avoid misguided career choices. Fourth, in terms of employment services, it is necessary to create a high-quality and convenient employment platform to provide students with more first-hand internships and job search channels as well as to help them adjust in a timely manner based on the market needs, thus ensuring the consonance of employment education with social changes.

5.3. Social level

As the main entity of absorbing talents, enterprises should innovate in theory, management, technology, etc. at the level of job docking, information communication, and enterprise management. It is necessary to adapt to the changing social environment to meet the market demands, establish an open innovation system, and continue to promote the sustainable development of enterprises, so as to increase the flexibility of enterprise employment positions in adapting to the diverse employment concepts of people waiting for employment. Secondly, the media should shoulder the responsibilities of creating a good employment public opinion environment and guiding the outlook on employment, so as to ensure that the positive outlook on employment is deeply rooted in the hearts of students and to guide their employment choices. In addition, for unemployed students who have already left the society, they do not have the opportunity to enjoy the employment guidance service provided by the school. The society should base on this to provide certain support to effectively solve the employment problem of students.

5.4. Family and individual levels

From the individual level, it is necessary to consider two aspects: the change of individual career concepts and the improvement of vocational skills. Graduates should make full use of the abundant school-enterprise resources and public employment services. They should gain more experience through trying, accumulate relevant work experience and personal connections, as well as improve their comprehensive professional ability and quality. From the family level, it is necessary to build a bridge between family members and college students as well as to guide college students to look for jobs with practical actions. Good family education is the foundation of a healthy personality. Family members should encourage them to actively participate in arduous work practices so that they can accumulate more work experience and maintain a positive attitude as well as expectation for employment.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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