

Current Situation Analysis and Countermeasure Research on “Slow Employment” of University Students

Xiaoyu Chu*, Qingfeng Tang

The University Key Laboratory of Intelligent Perception and Computing of Anhui Province, Anqing Normal University, Anqing 246133, Anhui Province, China

*Corresponding author: Xiaoyu Chu, 1542065434@qq.com

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Abstract: In the new era, with the popularization of higher education, the number of college graduates is increasing, and the severe employment situation has caused the predicament of “slow employment” among college students. In view of the existence of the social problem of “slow employment,” this paper discusses the causes of “slow employment” through the investigation of the current situation of “slow employment” of college students and puts forward some countermeasures. It is hoped that it can provide guidance and assistance to the employment of university graduates.

Keywords: “Slow employment” status quo; Causes; Countermeasures

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the scale of college graduates has been increasing year by year. According to relevant statistics, the scale of college graduates will increase from 8.2 million in 2018 to 11.58 million in 2023. At the same time, the phenomenon of “slow employment” has become more prominent among college students, which has triggered widespread social concern about the employment of college students^[1]. The Shanghai General Investigation Team of the National Bureau of Statistics of China conducted a special research on the employment and entrepreneurship situation of more than 4,000 fresh graduates from colleges and universities, and the results showed that 38 percent of the interviewees chose “slow employment.” Under the trend of “slow employment,” ways to achieve higher quality and fuller employment have become a problem that must be solved. This article takes the investigation of “slow employment” among undergraduate graduates from the School of Computer and Information Technology at a certain university as an example, analyzes the reasons for “slow employment” among college graduates, and proposes countermeasures to solve the problem of “slow

employment” speed.

2. Definition and types of “slow employment”

“Slow employment” refers to the phenomenon that university graduates do not rush into employment, but rather prepare and wait for a period of time before taking up employment. According to the employment intention and behavioural characteristics of job seekers, “slow employment” is divided into active and passive types. The active type of “slow employment” refers to graduates’ purposeful postponement of employment based on their personal career planning and development needs, to enhance the quality of employment and room for employment development. This type of graduate usually makes use of the “slow employment” period for vocational skills training, examination and research, project practice, etc., to enhance their career competitiveness. In contrast, passive “slow employment” is due to the imbalance of supply and demand in the job market, the lack of personal job-seeking skills and other factors that make it difficult to achieve the ideal employment, and thus forced to postpone employment, this type of graduates may face greater economic and psychological pressure during the “slow employment” period. These graduates may face greater economic and psychological pressure during the period of “slow employment.” Whether active or passive, the trend of “slow employment” has put forward new challenges and requirements for career guidance work in colleges and universities [2].

3. The current situation of the “slow employment” survey

In this survey, the employment data of 400 undergraduate graduates of the College of Computer Science and Information of a university in Anhui Province, China, from the class of 2024 were selected for statistics. From the results of the statistical data, the progress of the graduates of the School of Computer Science and Information Technology in this university is relatively slow in finding jobs (**Figure 1**). In addition, the results of this survey show that 15.5% of the graduates are “slow employment,” while 84.5% of the graduates are “slow employment.”

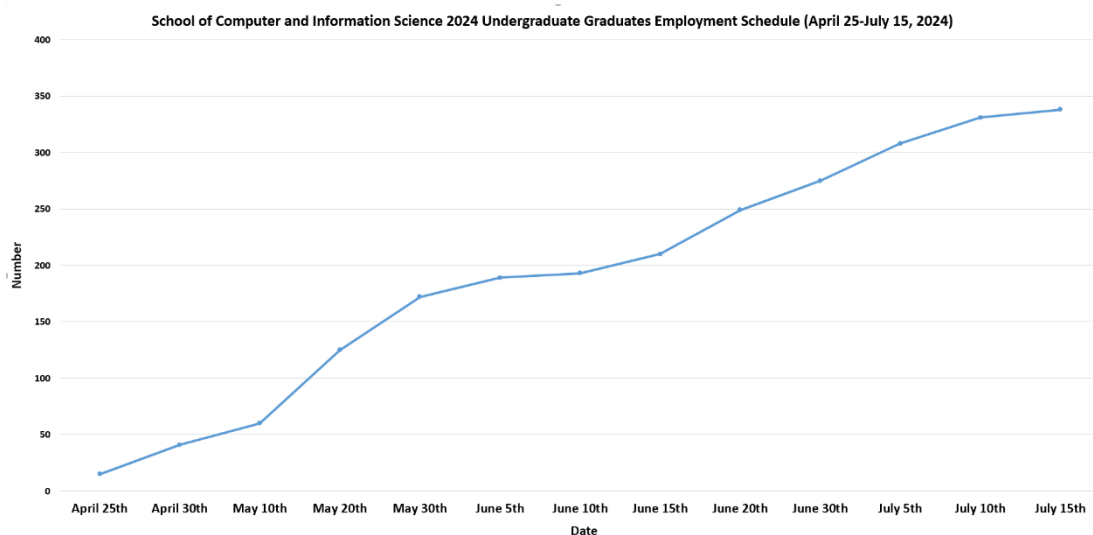


Figure 1. Statistics of the number of employed students in the 2024 undergraduate school of computer and information science of a university.

4. Causes of slow employment

4.1. Economic downturn and job losses

According to a report released by the World Bank, global economic growth fell from 2.6% in 2023 to 2.4 percent in 2024, nearly three-quarters of a percentage point lower than the average level in the 2010s. This would make 2020–2024 the slowest five-year period of growth for the global economy in 30 years, the report noted. Weak exports and lack of consumer momentum have led to a downward economic spiral in the market, with companies developing less demand for new business and jobs, and relying on layoffs to cut costs. Meanwhile, against the backdrop of high-quality economic development, China has vigorously pushed forward industrial upgrading, artificial intelligence and technological change, which to a certain extent has prompted the replacement of some traditional jobs, and further impacted the job market. Therefore, on the whole, under the trend of economic downturn, the market demand is weak, the incremental increase in the job market is reduced, the competition for stock is fierce, and there are fewer jobs, which objectively forces college graduates to choose “slow employment.” Employment is the greatest livelihood and the most basic support for economic development. As a result of the impact of the new epidemic and the economic and social environment at home and abroad, the employment situation for university students has been relatively severe in recent years ^[3].

4.2. Insufficient guidance on employment and entrepreneurship and weak practical teaching of employment in tertiary institutions

On the one hand, college employment and entrepreneurship guidance are out of touch with the job market. College employment and entrepreneurship guidance are not connected with students’ professional teaching, and there is a disconnect between the knowledge and skills acquired by students and the requirements of actual jobs, which leads to the lack of competitiveness of college students in the job market. At the same time, there is a lack of guidance in the formation of college students’ concepts of employment and career planning, which leads to the lack of career planning and development goals of some college students in line with their reality, and the lack of clear, scientific concepts of employment and career choice, which in turn affects the employment of students. College employment practice teaching link is weak, internship training content and the actual needs of enterprises out of touch with the problem still prevails. Take computer majors as an example, the teaching of software courses in many colleges and universities focuses on basic knowledge, and students are not proficient in the new generation of information technology such as big data and artificial intelligence, and lack engineering experience in practical projects. In addition, the old or lack of experimental equipment makes it difficult for students to fully contact and master the core technology required by the production line of enterprises in the practice training, which affects their job search competitiveness. On the other hand, rich families’ economic security is one of the reasons for students’ “slow employment.” With the improvement of the economic level, more family economic conditions have been reformed, which can provide sufficient economic security and spiritual support for college students, so that some college students can choose employment without economic income at the graduation stage, and provide support for them to choose “slow employment.”

4.3. College students’ vocational awareness and job-seeking skills are insufficient

Firstly, college students have too high expectations of their employment, pursuing perfect working conditions and high salaries, unwilling to compromise or accept lower-level positions or salaries, thus choosing to hold off on employment. At the same time, some college students pay too much attention to popular industries and well-known enterprises, ignoring the opportunities in other industries or small and medium-sized enterprises, and are

in a weak position in the recruitment competition between popular and well-known enterprises, which leads to their “slow employment.”

Second, one-sided pursuit of the “iron rice bowl.” Based on social recognition, family knowledge and other reasons, “public examination fever” is intensifying, and more college students blindly choose to take the public examination. However, the number of fresh graduates recruited by the relevant units is small, and the requirements are increasing year by year. With the economic downturn, financial tightening, some units downsizing, the recruitment of jobs is reduced, some college students in order to retain the status of graduates have to choose “slow employment”^[4].

Thirdly, some college students’ career planning is not clear, lack systematic analysis and planning for their career development, and fail to make corresponding preparations during the university period, which leads to “going with the flow” during the employment season and entering the “slow employment” team^[5]. In terms of career awareness, many college students lack an in-depth understanding of industry trends and job requirements, making it difficult for them to accurately position their career development direction. Take digital media technology as an example, virtual reality, meta-universe and other emerging technologies continue to emerge, but many students lack a systematic understanding of the responsibilities and requirements of emerging positions, and it is difficult to adjust the focus of professional learning and competence training in a timely manner. In addition, online recruitment is becoming more mainstream, and many college students lack the experience of online written tests, video interviews and other new forms of job search, and face greater challenges in adaptation.

5. Countermeasures to solve the problem of “slow employment”

5.1. Improve government support policies and create a good employment environment

Although the national and local governments have introduced a series of policies to support the employment and entrepreneurship of college students, the precision and effectiveness of the existing policies need to be further improved to promote the accurate employment of college graduates and alleviate the pressure of “slow employment”^[6]. At present, many of the financial and tax incentives, social security subsidies and other preferential policies for employment and entrepreneurship of college graduates, although to a certain extent reduce the recruitment cost of employers, but the precise incentive effect of guiding graduates to key industries, small and medium-sized micro-enterprises and other grass-roots employment is limited^[7]. Taking virtual reality majors as an example, although many local governments have set up special projects for the construction of virtual reality laboratories in colleges and universities, there is a lack of integrated planning and fine-tuned guidance in the procurement of hardware and software equipment, the equipping of teachers, and the development of industry-teaching integration courses, which has led to a disconnect between some of the laboratories and the technological development of the industry, and the practical needs of students.

To alleviate the phenomenon of “slow employment” and solve the problem of “slow employment,” the Government needs to fulfill its main responsibilities of protection and coordination. First of all, government departments need to coordinate the planning of employment and entrepreneurship support work for college students, strengthen the construction of career guidance and employment service systems and provide college students with support in employment counseling, career planning, and employment skills training, to help college students to clarify their employment direction, improve their job-seeking skills, and understand the

market demand and employment information. At the same time, the government needs to take measures such as “providing entrepreneurship training, business incubation park construction, and entrepreneurship financial support” to encourage and promote entrepreneurship and employment of college students with innovative entrepreneurship education and policy support, so as to reduce the phenomenon of “slow employment.”

Secondly, government departments need to play an active role in guiding policies and make every effort to promote economic construction and improve the economic environment, so as to provide support for improving market demand and increasing jobs. Finally, the government needs to play a concerted role in promoting in-depth cooperation between universities and enterprises, establishing a mechanism for the integration of industry, academia, research and application, and closely integrating talent training with actual demand to enhance the vocational ability and competitiveness of college students in employment.

5.2. Constructing an interactive platform of job market information in colleges and universities

The employment guidance departments of colleges and universities join hands with employers, industry associations, government agencies and other parties to jointly build an interactive platform for employment market information in colleges and universities. The core objective of the platform is to open up information barriers, release timely, accurate and comprehensive market supply and demand information, and improve the accuracy of job matching. Colleges and universities can invite technical experts and senior HR personnel from well-known enterprises to conduct online lectures to provide in-depth explanations of industry development trends and talent needs, and to help college students understand the employment situation as early as possible. The government’s human resources and social security departments can set up columns on the platform, regularly releasing a catalogue of in-demand talents and employment assistance policies, and guiding employers and graduates to carry out accurate matchmaking. Schools can make use of emerging technologies such as virtual reality to provide students with immersive workplace simulation experiences to help them adapt to the workplace environment in advance.

5.3. Improve the guidance mechanism for college students’ employment and entrepreneurship

On the one hand, colleges and universities can improve the guidance mechanism for college students’ employment and entrepreneurship, help college students form the correct concept of employment and career choice, and have perfect and realistic career planning, to solve the problem of “slow employment” of college students. Based on the actual situation of college students’ majors, interests, personalities and abilities, profession-oriented career planning and employment and entrepreneurship guidance can be carried out to help college students clarify their interests, strengths and development direction, understand the market dynamics, formulate employment plans and improve job-seeking skills. At the same time, in terms of professional teaching, university-enterprise cooperation and practical teaching reform are continuously promoted, and through the cooperation with enterprises in establishing internship bases and arranging students’ internships and practical training, the university provides students with opportunities to participate in project practice and social practice, so as to make students understand the real working environment in-depth and to provide a basis for updating their concepts of choosing a career, exploring their career interests and designing their career plans.

On the other hand, home-school cooperation can be developed to improve the guidance mechanism for

family education and take home-school co-education as the key to focusing on the concepts and abilities of college students in choosing employment and giving full play to the positive role of parents in guiding students to form the correct concepts of choosing employment and careers. Relying on online parents' salon and parents' guidance courses, parents are able to update their family education concepts, abandon traditional employment ideas such as "iron rice bowl" and "public rice," and change the "slow employment" of students caused by irrational factors such as spoiling and family conditions. The phenomenon of "slow employment" has been changed as a result of irrational factors such as indulgence and family conditions.

6. Conclusion

This paper analyzes the reasons for the phenomenon of "slow employment" of college students under the trend of "slow employment" in the new era, including insufficient guidance on employment and entrepreneurship in colleges and universities, weak practical teaching links in colleges and universities, rich family economic security, insufficient vocational knowledge and job-seeking ability of college students, and so on. Aiming at these causes, this paper puts forward countermeasures such as improving government support policies, creating a favorable employment environment, constructing an interactive platform for college employment market information, and improving the guidance mechanism for college students' employment and entrepreneurship, so as to strengthen college students' vocational literacy and job-seeking ability cultivation. The emergence of the phenomenon of "slow employment" is a systematic and structural problem, that requires the concerted efforts of the government, colleges and universities, parents, and students, to improve the economic environment, expand the job market, and motivate college students to update their concepts of choosing jobs and improve their employability, thus solving the problem of "slow employment."

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