

Analysis and Countermeasures of College Students' Unemployment Problem

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Abstract. As the economies of countries in East Asia continue to transform from traditional manufacturing to service industries and high-tech industries, many low-skilled jobs are gradually decreasing; the popularity of social education continues to increase, which has prompted the number of college students to continue to grow; the problem of population aging is gradually developing, and the competition in the labor market continues to intensify. These comprehensive social factors have led to the high level of unemployment among college students in East Asia in recent years. Young college students are facing huge employment pressure and workplace competition. Governments in various regions have taken active measures to solve the unemployment problem of young college students. This article focuses on China and uses the literature analysis method to mainly study the causes of unemployment among young college students, the negative impact of unemployment on college students, and the government's targeted and effective governance measures. The results and conclusions of this study show that the core problem of youth unemployment in China lies in the structural contradiction of the labor market and the disconnection between higher education and industrial demand. And the gap between graduate employment expectations and the real job supply.

Keywords: Unemployment Rate, College Students, Government Response Policies

1. Introduction

The unemployment rate refers to the proportion of the labor force that meets the "unemployment conditions". In the economic field, people who are willing and capable of working in a specific age group but have not yet found a job are considered unemployed. Unemployed people have no jobs, are looking for jobs shortly, and can work immediately. These people have the ability and willingness to work and belong to the unemployed population [1]. In recent years, employment issues have always been the focus of social attention because they are related to the stable development of the country and society. With the continuous development of population aging in developing countries, the employment problems of young college students have gradually become serious. This paper takes young college students, that is, ordinary undergraduate graduates, as the research object, and specifically analyzes the influencing factors, negative impacts, and response measures of college students. It aims to help improve social unemployment problems and promote full employment of college students by exploring the unemployment problems of young college

students. In terms of influencing factors, this article explores the causes of unemployment from multiple angles of supply and demand in the labor market, higher education development model, and college students' factors; in terms of negative impact, this article analyzes the adverse effects of unemployment from the economic, social and individual levels; in terms of response measures, this article helps the government analyze effective governance measures from the supply and demand perspectives. This paper discovers a new analytical perspective that breaks down the unemployment problem of adolescents into supply-side and demand-side and provides valuable references to governance policies.

2. Factors that influence college students' unemployment

2.1. The impact of the labor market on the employment rate of college students

The imbalance in supply and demand and fierce competition in the labor market are important factors affecting the employment of college students. In terms of supply and demand, the expansion of higher education has caused the number of college graduates to increase rapidly, but the corresponding jobs in the market have been in short supply, resulting in structural unemployment. The professional settings of some universities have failed to keep up with industrial demand, and there has been an oversupply of talent in some majors, while the talent gap in emerging industries has not yet been filled. In addition, many graduates tend to choose stable or higher-paying jobs, such as large cities or high-paying jobs, further exacerbating the supply and demand mismatch in some industries and regions.

From the perspective of the global economy, the rise in youth unemployment is not only affected by domestic factors but also impacted by international market fluctuations. Global events such as economic downward pressure and have reduced the demand for recruitment by enterprises, making the employment situation for youth even more severe. The labor market threshold in some countries is relatively high, such as strict requirements for employment experience, which will increase the difficulty of job hunting for fresh graduates. At the same time, companies pay more attention to practical experience when recruiting, while college education is still based on theory, which makes some college students lack sufficient employment competitiveness [2].

2.2. Issues in the development of higher education

There is a significant structural contradiction between the higher education model and the demand for economic development. The adjustment of major settings in colleges and universities is slow, and it is difficult to keep up with the pace of industrial transformation and upgrading, resulting in an oversupply of graduates from traditional majors and an insufficient supply of talent in emerging fields. The teaching content focuses on the imparting of theoretical knowledge, the practical teaching links are weak, and the depth of school-enterprise cooperation is insufficient, which makes graduates lack practical operational ability and experience in solving practical problems. The positioning of different types of universities is converging, the applied universities have failed to highlight their characteristics, and lack differentiation from the training model of research-based universities, which has reduced the competitiveness of graduates in the employment market. This disconnection not only causes a waste of educational resources but also leads to a contradiction between "difficulty in employment" and "difficulty in recruiting workers" [3].

2.3. Career choice concepts and employability

The employment difficulties of college students are also closely related to their employment concepts and professional abilities. In terms of employment concepts, current graduates generally tend to choose jobs with a "focus on the system and neglecting the market". Data shows that more than 60% of fresh graduates choose civil servants, public institutions, and state-owned enterprises as their first choice, and there is an obvious bias against private enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises. This preference for job selection has led to a contradiction between fierce competition in the employment market for public examinations and difficulty in recruiting small and medium-sized enterprises [4].

In terms of professional ability, there are three main prominent problems: first, insufficient professional practical ability, and disconnected from theoretical knowledge and practical operation; second, lack of professional qualities, including soft skills such as communication skills, teamwork, etc.; third, insufficient employment preparation and lack of systematic career planning and job hunting skills. These problems directly affect the employment competitiveness of graduates [5].

3. Negative impact of the college students' unemployment problem

3.1. Economic dimension

The unemployment of college students has multiple negative impacts on the national economic development. From the perspective of imbalance in input and output of higher education, the country invests a lot of resources every year to cultivate college students, but unemployment causes these human resources to be unable to be effectively converted into productivity. According to statistics, China's total investment in higher education in 2022 exceeded 1.5 trillion yuan, but the implementation rate of college graduates' destinations was only about 80%, which means that about 20% of the education investment could not be converted into effective human capital. From the perspective of unemployment weakening the vitality of the consumer market, as a potential consumer group, the decline in the purchasing power of unemployed college students directly affects the growth of domestic demand. What's more serious is that long-term unemployment may form a "scar effect" - research shows that unemployment experience will reduce individuals' future income by about 20%, which may last for more than ten years and seriously affect the future development of the national economy [6].

3.2. Social aspect

From a social perspective, the unemployment of college students is becoming a new source of contradictions in Chinese society. The unemployment of youth has exacerbated the gap between educational expectations and reality. Chinese families invest more than 500,000 yuan in their children's education on average, but unemployment makes it difficult for these investments to get expected returns, causing strong social anxiety. In recent years, the phenomenon of "slow employment" has become increasingly prominent. Data from the Ministry of Education in 2023 showed that the proportion of graduates who chose not to find employment for the time being reached 12.8%, an increase of 5 percentage points from 2019. Furthermore, unemployment strengthens the social situation of class solidification. Family social capital has become a key factor in employment, and it is even more difficult for ordinary family graduates to obtain high-quality positions. It is worth noting that unemployment has also given rise to new social problems. For

example, the phenomenon of "full-time children" has surged, and some graduates are forced to rely on their parents to support them at home, which not only increases the burden on the family but also delays the normal socialization process [7].

3.3. Individual level

Unemployment also has a significant impact on the individual level of Chinese college students. From a psychological perspective, continuous job search failure has caused many college students to suffer from severe individual anxiety. According to a survey conducted by China Youth Daily in 2023, 78% of unemployed graduates have moderate or above symptoms of depression and in terms of the future career development of college students, a long period of employment gaps will cause persistent harm. According to the study, the probability of getting an interview opportunity for college graduates who have been unemployed for more than 6 months has decreased by 60%. Finally, in family relationships, economic dependence caused by unemployment can lead to intergenerational conflict. According to survey data, 67% of unemployed graduates have had fierce disputes with their parents. The more far-reaching impact is that long-term unemployment may lead to a complete withdrawal of some young people from the formal employment market. In 2023, about 5% of unemployed graduates turned to informal flexible employment, and these positions generally lack social security and career development space.

4. Employment promotion measures

4.1. Supply-side measures

At present, the unemployment problem of young college students in China is becoming increasingly prominent. There are two main problems: one is that talent training is out of touch with social needs, and the other is that employment concepts are misaligned with actual needs.

From the perspective of education supply, the professional settings of colleges and universities lag behind industrial development. The enrollment scale of traditional majors such as business is too large, while the compound talents urgently needed by emerging industries such as intelligent manufacturing are in short supply. To solve this structural contradiction, it is necessary to establish a dynamic adjustment mechanism for majors, reduce the enrollment scale of majors with low employment rates, and add emerging interdisciplinary disciplines such as artificial intelligence. At the same time, innovative school-enterprise collaborative education models such as "order-based training", strengthen the training of compound talents such as "finance + data science", and improve students' practical ability [8].

On the other hand, the survey shows that more than 60% of college students are flocking to apply for positions within the system, and their employment areas are highly concentrated in the eastern region. To change this situation, colleges and universities should carry out full-process employment guidance from the beginning of enrollment, and help students establish diversified employment concepts through on-site visits to enterprises and publicity of typical grassroots employment. It is also necessary to improve the innovation and entrepreneurship education system, lower the threshold for entrepreneurship, and let students realize that the value of life can be realized in different fields.

4.2. Demand-side measures

To solve the employment problem of college students, it is necessary to build a diversified employment security system, give full play to the main role of enterprises, and improve the supporting network. It is recommended to promote it in three dimensions: first, optimize the fiscal and tax incentive policies, give 10% and 15% corporate income tax exemptions to small and medium-sized enterprises with 5% and 10% of fresh graduates respectively, and subsidize high-quality internship positions at a standard of 1,000 yuan per person per month; deepen the integration of industry and education, support leading enterprises and universities to jointly build modern industrial colleges, and the investment of enterprises can be deducted from taxable income at a ratio of 1:1.5. Second, implement the talent reserve plan for key industries, requiring strategic emerging enterprises such as artificial intelligence to reserve 5%-8% of positions each year for special recruitment of fresh graduates and establish a supporting training and promotion mechanism. Third, improve the employment service network, and universities set up service stations to provide "131" standardized services (1 guidance + 3 recommendations + 1 training), and implement dynamic tracking of graduates who leave school without employment; optimize the grassroots employment incentive policies, provide settlement subsidies and tuition compensation for employees in the central and western regions, and include flexible employment in the coverage of social security [9]. At the same time, a rapid processing mechanism for employment discrimination will be established, a nationwide unified big data employment platform will be created, and a pilot project will be launched to build a comprehensive service center that integrates job introduction, entrepreneurship incubation, and other functions to achieve accurate job matching and one-stop service.

5. Conclusion

The issue of youth unemployment in China has been a growing concern due to structural imbalances in the labor market, the mismatch between higher education and industry needs, and shifting economic conditions. This study has explored the key factors contributing to youth unemployment, its negative implications, and potential government interventions.

Findings indicate that the oversupply of graduates, lack of practical skills, and unrealistic employment expectations contribute significantly to the problem. Additionally, structural mismatches in the labor market exacerbate job competition, leaving many graduates struggling to secure stable employment. The study highlights that government policies should focus on education reform, industry collaboration, and targeted employment support programs to improve job prospects for young graduates.

However, this study has limitations, such as not incorporating empirical data analysis or case studies to validate the findings. Future research could focus on the long-term effects of youth unemployment on career trajectories and explore how technological advancements impact job opportunities for new graduates. By addressing these gaps, future studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the issue and contribute to more effective policy solutions.

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