

Reflections on the mentality of "slow employment" of graduates from mid-western universities

Zhengyan Liu*, Wei Kang, Xian Jinhong Meng, Kerry Chen

Abstract: The employment of college students has always been the focus of society and a hot topic, and the employment mentality of college students themselves is an important factor affecting the employment choice and employment path. This paper analyzes the characteristics of the employment mentality of graduates from colleges and universities in central and western China, further analyzes in detail the factors influencing the employment of college students from social factors, school factors and college students' own factors, and puts forward corresponding suggestions for the smooth employment of college students, such as giving up employment discrimination by themselves, carrying out employment training and strengthening employment inclusion by the society, in order to help college students in central and western China to have a healthy employment mentality and help them solve their This paper is based on a sample of 500 students from Changjiang University in Hubei Province. In this paper, 500 university students from Changjiang University in Hubei Province were interviewed, and 20 of them were selected as representative students (the following are replaced by their majors and serial numbers) to understand and explore the influence of employment mindset on employment choice and its causes, in order to help graduates accurately determine their employment mindset and find the right solutions.

Keywords: employment mentality, mid-west, characteristics

The employment mentality is closely related to the choice of employment and career path. In the face of the current situation that the scale of higher education is expanding and the employment level is gradually developing towards the masses, the employment situation of university students is not optimistic. At the same time, college graduates from the central and western regions have developed a unique "slow employment" mentality due to their regional culture and family education. Under the double pressure of the epidemic and the economic downturn, this "slow employment" mentality is even more obvious, which also causes a mismatch between employment supply and demand on the one hand, and becomes an important factor in the difficulty of employment in the central and western regions. Therefore, graduates should have a thorough understanding of their own personality characteristics and actual situation, and universities and society should also analyse the characteristics and influencing factors of the employment mentality of university students, so that multiple parties can work together to solve the employment problems of university graduates and create a good employment environment for them. In this paper, the typical employment mentality problems in the interviews, the analysis of the causes and the suggestions for solutions are presented in three aspects: thinking about the "full employment" mentality of graduates from universities in central and western China.

I. The mentality problem of employment of graduates from universities in the Midwest

During the interviews, it was found that the main mentality problems of the group of college graduates with employment difficulties in central and western China are focused on avoidance mentality, excessive pursuit

of stability mentality and over-idealization mentality.

1. Avoidance of daunting mentality

Midwestern college graduates are conservative about employment, and in fact many still maintain a high school mentality. Faced with employment, many students are unable to adapt to the change in identity and mentality for a while, resulting in a lack of clarity in their perception of themselves, and are therefore less motivated to take up direct employment, which is more of a passive employment rather than an active selection process. During the interviews we found that the increasingly severe employment situation has caused many people to develop a fearful and avoiding mentality, thus transforming their goals through examinations, public examinations, editorial examinations and certification examinations to enrich their campus life and fill the confusion and void within, but in reality it is a state of avoidance towards employment.

Q: How do you feel about taking public exams, graduate school, editorial exams and finding a job?

A: A lot of people around me joke that if we don't go on to graduate school, we'll either do sales or raise pigs. The vast majority of college students feel that they will go to graduate school (or maybe it's a survivor bias I'm not sure), and I feel that after more and more people go to graduate school it will change from a "can do thing" to a "must do thing", but it's hard for people like me who are forced to roll up I'm stuck in a cycle of not being able to roll and not being able to pose.

Some students are reluctant to take up direct employment even if they have a simple work experience, as university students without social experience and experience in the job search process tend to have low expectations and low satisfaction giving them a harsh and realistic blow, making them fearful and self-protective.

2. Excessive pursuit of peace of mind

Whether from the perspective of career choice or the factors influencing employment choice, graduates from universities in central and western China always maintain a stable mindset towards employment. A stable attitude is reflected in the choice of career path: they are not in a hurry to find a job, and are not willing to choose "employment first before choosing a career". In the statistics of students' employment intention, the number of those who choose to enter graduate schools, public examinations and institutions is high, with 75% choosing to enter graduate schools and only 10% choosing direct employment, while fewer people choose private enterprises, entrepreneurship and freelancing. Most university students choose to work in institutions mainly because of their stable work, stable salary and stable welfare. Second stability is reflected in their criteria for choosing employment: graduates from universities in central and western China prefer to stay in central and western China rather than in first-tier cities such as Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta, on the one hand because of the high living consumption and employment pressure in first-tier cities, and on the other hand they are less interested in fast-paced city life, so they will choose to stay in their hometowns or other cities in central and western China. Of those interviewed, all chose to stay in third-tier cities in central and western China to work and live, and no one chose developed cities and regions such as the North, Guangzhou and Shenzhen. The third stability is reflected in the factors affecting employment: Salary and benefits are not the primary pursuit of most graduates, who prefer to realise their personal value in meaningful work rather than just utilitarian work.

Q: What factors will you look for more in your future job search? Why?

A: If you are looking for a job in the future, I look for the following four elements, the first is whether I like it,

because this is the motivation to support me to work on. The second is that the work environment, I am referring to a company's culture and office atmosphere, I hope to be able to move in a relatively free and relaxed environment. The third is the salary. I want to be financially independent. The fourth is location, as I am very fun-loving, so I would like to work in a location above the city.

A: Professional skills, teamwork, interpersonal skills, good abilities to have a good opportunity to show themselves, and good teamwork and interpersonal skills can make the work done with half the effort to have a better chance to develop.

3. Overly idealistic mindset

When choosing their career paths, graduates from universities in central and western China focus on career prospects and room for development. When choosing their career paths, graduates from universities in central and western China focus on career prospects and the future development of their companies and industries. They prefer careers and jobs with good employment prospects and development prospects, and focus on the improvement of their personal abilities and room for appreciation, rather than focusing only on immediate benefits and treatment. When choosing a career position, the influence of job salary and remuneration on college graduates is lower than the influence of career prospects on job choice. Regardless of whether they end up being employed in the Midwest or in other regions, university graduates are increasingly concerned about career development and future planning, and are reluctant to be employed blindly and quickly. On the other hand, however, there is also a reluctance to settle for a mentality of over-expectation, where their development expectations are not aligned with their own abilities and employment opportunities and social support, resulting in an overly idealistic mentality affecting employment.

Q: What factors do you look for more in a future job search?

A: For the fancy is that one is the company's current development, and another is that after I join, my future development prospects, and then these two are as a main reason, and then the next is to look at the salary or treatment aspects of these aspects.

II. Analysis of factors affecting the employment mentality of graduates from central and western universities

During the interviews, it was found that four major factors contribute to the employment mindset of college graduates, namely, their own, family, school and social factors.

1. Own factors

On the one hand, college graduates stay in the ivory tower of school and are protected in the hotbed of family, lacking social experience and experience, they do not have a comprehensive understanding of society and career, and lack certain information exchange ability and collection ability, so that they have high career expectations themselves but cannot meet the employment needs of enterprises, not only in professionalism but also in the implicit skills that affect employment, such as communication ability, organization ability, coordination ability, interpersonal ability and emergency handling ability. Not only do they fail to learn professional skills, but they also lack implicit skills such as communication skills, organisational skills, coordination skills, interpersonal skills and emergency handling skills.

2. Family factors

There is a gap between family income, family capital, family education expenditure, family education concept and family education content in Central and Western China and the developed coastal cities in the Southeast. There are more poor families in the Midwest, more left-behind children and less educated parents, all of which directly affect the employment choices of graduates. As a result of family planning, there are more "one-child" families in the central and western regions, and parents have limited education, but they hope to rely on the first generation of university students in rural areas to change the status quo, so graduates from universities in the central and western regions have the burden of revitalising their families and prospering them. However, the lack of guidance and direction in their formative years often means that they face additional difficulties in school and in social competition, which they can only solve on their own. All of the above can have an impact on their career choices.

Q: What factors do you think are currently affecting the employment of today's graduates?

A: Low-eyed, Confucius-style employment concepts, reluctance to take off their long shirts to choose a basic career, coupled with parents from childhood instilled vocational education and pressure, many college students are increasingly confused, do not know what they really want to do, engaged in which career.

3. School factors

Education resources in the central and western regions are relatively backward, and there is still a lack of talent training and curriculum content system, and the training in schools cannot be directly linked to the needs of enterprises. Many university students feel that the school curriculum is not in line with the needs of the society. Schools have not yet perfected the career planning and employment matching process, and the talent cultivation model is not mature enough compared with the eastern region, and higher education is lagging behind the current industrial structure adjustment and the change of social talent demand in China, which mainly manifests itself in the difficulty of adapting discipline and professional settings to social needs, superficial guidance for employment in universities, and the lack of systematic talent cultivation mechanism.

4. Social factors

The current employment situation is severe and there is a mismatch between the supply and demand of jobs. In the face of the increasing number of college graduates year by year, the number of jobs available in society is limited, so many college students will have to compete fiercely for fewer jobs, and they will have to "roll" more and more if they want to find a suitable and good job. At the same time, society is less forgiving to college students, and there are fewer resources and fewer choices in the central and western regions compared to the eastern coastal regions, so graduates face more employment pressure, which makes them unable to analyse the employment situation and employment status soberly and objectively, and often have a negative, fearful and retreating mentality.

Q: What do you think are the current factors affecting the employment of university graduates?

A: Since the new crown epidemic in 2020, the overall employment situation is still very severe, 2022 fresh graduates reached this 11.58 million, then for such a data, the job market provides limited jobs, resulting in this employment is facing a very severe form, that is, the first aspect of limited resources, the second aspect of the current surge in the number of people receiving higher education. The expansion of higher education has led to

an influx of more people into the job market, but the society is close to semi-saturation, and it is not possible to provide more jobs for us at one time, which leads to this employment crowding or some slow employment situation.

III. Solutions to the Employment Mindset of Graduates from Universities in Central and Western China

Based on the three major employment mentality problems of graduates from universities in the Midwest and the four major factors of their formation, combined with the actual situation, it is necessary to think of solutions at three levels: graduates themselves, schools and society.

(1) Graduates themselves

On the one hand, graduates need to change their concept of employment, give up career illusions and over-expectations, avoid employment discrimination, enhance their initiative and motivation, and actively participate in internship practice to lay a solid foundation for employment. At the same time, they need to strengthen their own skills and enhance their professional skills and abilities in order to better adapt to the employment requirements of enterprises. Regardless of the changes in the employment market, the most important thing is that college graduates should firmly believe in their ideals, improve their own abilities and qualities, improve their all-round abilities in all aspects while improving their employment skills, and strive to keep up with the changing times and the requirements of enterprise development.

Q: Do you feel that you meet the employment requirements of most companies?

A: It should be satisfying, both in terms of professional skills and the interpersonal aspect, which I seem to be better at myself, and I still need to enhance my professional skills further, while always paying attention to my health issues!

(2) School level

Schools lack career guidance and career planning in talent training, and there is a disconnect between the education curriculum training system and employment in enterprises. Especially in the central and western regions where education resources are relatively scarce, while improving the quality of their own education, they should focus on the changes in social employment requirements and strengthen education on students' mental health and civilizational upbringing. Secondly, deepen the cooperation between schools and enterprises, provide more employment internship practice opportunities for school students, do a good job in helping college graduates in their employment, and help students with employment difficulties to familiarise themselves with the recruitment needs of relevant majors and master job-seeking skills through various forms, so as to better solve the problem of employment difficulties for employed students. Once again, the work of employment student support should be precise and effective in all aspects, focusing on the individual needs of college students, and focusing on the difficulties of employment concept, employment mentality difficulties and other invisible difficulties while paying attention to the employment rate.

(3) Social dimension

The government needs to expand domestic demand, in addition to policy support, financial support, institutional protection and other aspects of the employment of college graduates, but also to combine the characteristics of students in central and western China, to give corresponding resources and special protection, to help them eliminate the negative employment mentality of imbalance. At the same time, we should pay

attention to entrepreneurship education, use entrepreneurship to drive employment, drive the freedom of entrepreneurship awareness into students' lives, focus on cultivating entrepreneurial consciousness and entrepreneurial spirit among university students at the level of entrepreneurial awareness, and integrate entrepreneurial thinking into the whole process of students' study.

In general, the phenomenon of slow employment is a product of social development to a certain stage, whether it is passive slow employment, or active slow employment, all reflect the changes in the concept of employment of college graduates. Passive "slow employment" may be a reluctant move, but active "slow employment" is also their own choice, life is in the choice, competition, and anxiety in the continuous progress.

Reference:

- [1]. Cai Xiaobin. Research on improving the employment support system for key groups [J]. Journal of the China Institute of Labor Relations, 2021, 35(04): 116-124.
- [2]. Nie Min. Analysis and application research of student behavior in higher education [D]. University of Electronic Science and Technology, 2020.
- [3]. Luo Wanqiu. Investigation on the current situation of career decision-making difficulties among first-generation college students from families and measures to improve them [D]. Liaoning Normal University, 2020.
- [4]. Dong Ling. Research on the phenomenon of "slow employment" of college students from the perspective of individualization [D]. Qufu Normal University, 2018.
- [5]. Li Hongxia, Liu Wenjun, Hu Deping, Dong Junjie. Research on the characteristics, causes and countermeasures of college students with employment difficulties: A study on the employment situation of 2010-2011 graduates from a university in Shanghai [J]. Journal of China Institute of Labor Relations, 2012, 26(05): 60-65.
- [6]. Jiao Yong. An analysis of the deep-seated reasons for the employment difficulties of college students [J]. Education and Career, 2011, (14):66-68.
- [7]. Yang Hongbo, Lin Xiping. Investigation and reflection on the employment competitiveness of female college students from economically disadvantaged families in colleges and universities--Guangxi University as an example [J]. Journal of Guangxi University (Philosophy and Social Science Edition), 2010, 32(02): 102-108.
- [8]. Cheng, Liang, Zhang, Hanwen. Theoretical basis and policy support model of grassroots employment substitution for college graduates in western and central China [J]. Journal of Hubei Administrative College, 2014,(05): 43-46.
- [9]. Wei P, Sun Peilei. Psychological dilemmas and coping strategies of local college graduates' employment in the post-epidemic era: an example of undergraduate graduates from Nanyang Normal College [J]. Journal of Nanyang Normal College, 2023, 22(03): 51-54.
- [10]. Sun Yaowei. A brief discussion on the psychological analysis of college students' employment [J]. Sichuan Labor Security, 2023, (04):73.
- [11]. Yang Xiao. The causes and countermeasures of the phenomenon of "slow employment" of college students [J]. Cooperative Economy and Technology, 2023,(08):94-95.
- [12]. Tian Hongwei. Research on the causes and countermeasures of the phenomenon of "slow employment" of college students under the new situation [J]. Journal of Luoyang Institute of Technology (Social Science Edition), 2023, 38(01):88-91.
- [13]. Hou Ran, Zhang Ke Xiao. The causes and guidance of the problem of "deferred employment" among

- college graduates[J]. *Modern Communication*, 2022, (06):83-89+123.
- [14]. Zhang Xiaoning. An analysis of the employment psychological problems of college students and ideas for solving them [J]. *Chinese and foreign enterprise culture*, 2021,(12):49-50.
- [15]. Cai Xiaobin. Research on improving the employment support system for key groups [J]. *Journal of the China Institute of Labor Relations*, 2021, 35(04):116-124.

This paper is the key project of Hubei Youth Volunteer Service Project "Exploration and research on the path of college students' volunteer service to rural revitalization in the new era from the perspective of synergy", the ideological and political education research project of the Social Science Fund of Yangtze University in 2022 "Research on the ways of college students' social practice service to rural revitalization from the perspective of Synergetics" (2022cxyb08), the social science fund project of Yangtze University in 2022, From the perspective of Synergetics, the research on the coordination mechanism of provincial colleges and universities in central and western China to build a new era school ideological and political work system (2022csy16), the "Special Support Plan for the New Generation Soul Casting Project" of Yangtze University in 2023, and the "Willing to Benefit" practice of the phased achievements of the education studio.

***Corresponding author: Wei Kang**, master, Secretary of the Youth League Committee of the school of electronic information, Changjiang University (assistant researcher of the research center of the Communist Youth League of China), professor, main research direction: Network Ideological and political education, Communist Youth League research, School of electronic information, Changjiang University, electronics & information, Yangtse University, 434023, Changjiang University, No. 1, nanhu road, Jingzhou City, Hubei Province.