

Research on the Employment Difficulties of College Students in China Based on the Epidemic Situation

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Abstract. The employment issue of college students is closely related to people's livelihoods and social stability, and is a highly concerned social issue. Under the special background of the COVID-19, the employment problem of college students in China is prominent, which is mainly reflected in the decline in the employment rate of college students and the serious layoffs of employers. The article analyzes the employment problem of college students from three aspects: economic development status, changes in market demand, and supply level of college students. Suggestions are put forward from several aspects such as government policy support, active cooperation between the market and universities, and the establishment of correct employment and career choices by college students.

Keywords: Covid-19; Employment Difficulties of College Students; Decrease in Economic Growth; Path to Promote Employment.

1. The Current Situation and Importance of College Students' Employment in China from the Perspective of the COVID-19 Epidemic Situation

1.1. The Slowdown in Global Economic Development Due to the Outbreak of COVID

During the Spring Festival of 2020, the COVID-19 epidemic broke out in China and spread around the world at a rapid speed, which dealt a great blow to global economic development. At the present stage of normalization of epidemic prevention and control, in order to effectively control the spread of novel coronavirus, China insists on the. The dynamic zero-Covid policy requires that when local cases appear, each epidemic is eliminated in the bud by finding and putting it out together, which is also called zero clearing. As the saying goes, every coin has two sides. The dynamic zero-Covid policy has effectively controlled the spread of the COVID-19 epidemic, but at the same time, it has led to the slowdown of China's economic development. In 2020, the growth rate of China's economic development will be 2.3%, which is 3.8% lower than that before the epidemic. (Yan, 2009) The slowdown of economic development will inevitably have an impact on many enterprises and employers. Whether it is the reduction of jobs or the layoffs of enterprises, it will undoubtedly increase the difficulty of smooth employment for millions of college graduates.

1.2. The Importance of Solving the Employment Problem of College Students in China

The ancients often said that "food is the most important thing for people". Indeed, food is the foundation for people to survive, and employment is the guarantee of people's quality of life. In recent years, the decline in the employment rate of college students has become more and more significant, which has had a great impact on the country, society, families, and individual college students. As far as the country is concerned, the employment difficulties of college students may lead to a decline in the quality of national human resources. A large number of potential human resources and talents are buried in the competition in the job market, so they cannot play their role and their own value to promote the country's economic development and scientific and technological progress. In terms of the whole society, the employment of college students is a key factor affecting social stability. First of all, the problem that college graduates cannot find jobs may lead to the aggravation of social dissatisfaction. Many college students are dissatisfied with society or others because they cannot face

the reality of Adventureland and the huge gap between them and their ideal life in their school days. Secondly, if the downward trend of college students' employment rate cannot be slowed down in recent years, it may lead to the widening gap between the rich and the poor, thus affecting intergenerational mobility and losing the social value of education in promoting class mobility. In particular, many families in rural areas and poverty-stricken areas have had great economic pressure as they need to send their children to college. If the college students who come out of these poverty-stricken areas cannot find jobs as soon as possible after graduation, their families cannot repay the economic burden, which may eventually further aggravate poverty. Obviously, this is not in line with the core values of China's social development. Concerning families, many college students can only stay at home because they are not able to find a job after graduation, which has caused great economic pressure on many families and also affected the living standards of the whole family to some extent. Finally, for college graduates themselves, many frustrations and setbacks encountered in job hunting will cause individuals to feel great social and psychological pressure, which indirectly leads to the emergence of mental health problems in college graduates, and there are also potential risks of stimulating family and social contradictions.

2. The Analysis of the Causes of Employment Difficulties of College Students in China under the Background of the Epidemic Situation

2.1. The Slowdown of Economic Growth

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 epidemic in early 2020, China's economic development has been significantly affected by the epidemic. Regarding the year 2020, the speed of China's economic development has obviously slowed down. In 2020, the growth rate of China's economic development is 2.3%, which is 3.8% lower than that before the epidemic. (Zhou, 2022) The main reason for this phenomenon is the sudden impact of the COVID-19 epidemic. First of all, the prevention and control of epidemic situations need to avoid large-scale gatherings of people, which makes the passenger flow in large-scale consumer places such as shopping malls drop sharply, which leads to a sharp drop in national consumption demand. Secondly, with the continuous development and spread of the foreign epidemic situation, the import and export trade in the international market has been seriously impacted, and there has been a shortage of raw material supply or a sharp drop in supply demand, which has caused a serious blow to China's export income. In addition, due to the epidemic, the daily business activities of many small and medium-sized enterprises have been seriously disturbed, and many enterprises have stopped production or even faced the risk of bankruptcy, especially in the service industries such as tourism, entertainment, and catering. Therefore, the added value of service industries to the growth rate of economic development has also been greatly reduced.

2.2. The Slowdown in Market Demand

Since the epidemic, the sudden drop in the demand for jobs in the job market is a major factor that causes the employment difficulties of college students. Affected by this epidemic, the economic benefits of many employers and enterprises such as tourism, catering, wholesale and retail industries have fallen sharply. As a result, many enterprises were forced to reduce the expenditure on human resources, resulting in a sharp drop in recruitment demand, and some small enterprises even closed down directly. According to the survey, "In 2020, the overall recruitment demand dropped by 34%, the recruitment demand of fresh graduates dropped by 44%, and the recruitment demand of small and micro enterprises dropped by 52%". (Wu, 2022) Thus, it can be seen that the significant decline in the demand of the job market has undoubtedly caused a shortage of jobs, and the employment competition of fresh graduates has become increasingly fierce, which aggravates the current situation of college students' employment difficulties.

2.3. The Increase in the Supply Level of College Graduates

While the demand for jobs in the job market has decreased significantly, the supply of college graduates is increasing. In 2020, the number of college graduates in China reached 8.74 million, an increase of 400,000. In 2021, the number of college graduates in China reached 9.7 million, while in 2022, the number of graduates rose to 10.76 million, resulting in the status quo of oversupply. From the perspective of graduates themselves, first of all, college graduates are already under the dual pressure of graduation and employment, and the arrival of the COVID-19 epidemic has made this pressure even greater.(Gui, 2021) Many college graduates, such as those majoring in science and engineering, cannot come to school in time to do experiments, which makes it difficult to finish their graduation thesis, and they have no intention to prepare for job hunting. Even if they can graduate successfully, many college students will inevitably have greater psychological anxiety in the face of overwhelming negative news about epidemic situations and employment, which will lead to a lack of confidence in job hunting. In addition, the severe epidemic situation in other countries in the world has also caused many graduates who are going to study abroad to postpone or even give up their plans to study abroad. A large number of graduates who have studied abroad have also changed their direction and decided to return to China for employment, thus further increasing the total number of job seekers and greatly intensifying the fierce competition for job hunting among college graduates. Finally, some college graduates' backward concept of employment and incorrect concept of job choice also lead to the problem of difficult employment. Some college students have high expectations for work, but their social practice ability is poor, and their personal comprehensive quality is low. In particular, some graduates have low moral quality, lack basic social responsibility and dedication, and are far from the requirements of employers. In the end, it is naturally difficult to find a satisfactory job.

3. The Path to Promote the Employment Development of College Students in China

In order to fundamentally solve the employment problem of college students, the government, employers, universities, and students themselves need to make corresponding improvements and adjustments.

3.1. Government

As far as the government is concerned, in order to help college graduates solve the problem of employment difficulties, first of all, it is necessary to formulate and improve policies to ensure the employment of college graduates. Meanwhile, it is necessary to ensure the implementation of relevant employment policies through supervision. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, the state and local governments have issued a series of support policies for the employment of fresh college graduates, including 189,000 graduate students and 322,000 undergraduate students, as well as employment policies such as "taking up jobs before passing the examination of certificate".(Liu, 2022) Secondly, the government needs to pay attention to the publicity of employment policies. Knowing these employment policies and information is the basic condition for college students to make employment decisions, and it can also enhance their confidence in employment. Therefore, government departments should expand information channels and increase the publicity of employment support policies through policy preaching, new media interpretation, and other ways.

3.2. Market

In terms of enterprises and employers, first of all, they should actively cooperate with relevant government departments and universities to do a good job in the employment of graduates, and respond to and support relevant policies put forward by government departments in a timely manner. For example, they can promote online and offline recruitment channels at the same time, strive to do a good job in the response and improvement of employment recruitment under the background of epidemic normalization, pre-examine and check employment information in advance, and pay attention to and ensure the online and offline job security of college students. Secondly, enterprises

should create more jobs for college graduates through scientific management, introduction of technology, development of new industries, continuous promotion of product structure optimization and upgrading, and improvement of economic benefits. In addition, enterprises should set up jobs scientifically in the process of recruitment, instead of deliberately raising the threshold and paying too much attention to graduates' work experience and experience, thus greatly increasing the difficulty of graduates' job hunting.

3.3. Universities and Students

For college graduates, first, they should face the reality frankly and overcome the anxiety of employment. The unfavorable factors brought by the COVID-19 epidemic to employment are objective facts that every graduate cannot escape. Instead of always being at a loss in the face of reality, or feeling sorry for themselves, it is better to face reality, go to the job market with a positive attitude, face difficulties, and regard change as an opportunity. Secondly, college graduates should position themselves reasonably and establish a correct view of employment. In the post-epidemic era, the number of jobs increased is very limited. Graduates should lower their standards appropriately, and proceed from reality. If they can get a job smoothly, they should not be overly picky about whether the jobs fully meet their expected standards. Finally, the most important thing is that college graduates must master solid professional basic knowledge, actively participate in social practice activities, increase their work experience through internships and other opportunities, and strive to enhance the core competitiveness of job hunting and employment.

In terms of universities, first of all, we should attach great importance to the employment of college graduates in the post-epidemic era, strive to open up the employment market, and go deep into all walks of life to dig out employment-related information for graduates and find suitable jobs. Secondly, universities should actively develop the graduate employment market centered on the employment information network, and establish and improve the system of collecting, processing, and publishing employment information, so that college students can easily and conveniently complete job-hunting procedures such as posting job resumes, inquiring demand information and online competition through the campus employment website. Simultaneously, universities should also strictly examine the recruitment information of employers to ensure that the information is true and effective, and prevent graduates from being deceived or even falling into pyramid schemes. In addition, universities should also increase assistance to graduates with difficulties to help them successfully complete employment. Some key groups need special attention among college graduates, such as poor graduates and graduates from remote mountainous areas. For this part of the graduates, universities should focus on the implementation of one-on-one assistance measures to provide them with equal employment opportunities until these graduates successfully find jobs.

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