

# Research on the Employment Problems and Promotion Paths of Students in Local Colleges and Universities

## Taking Hubei University of Automotive Technology as an Example

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### ABSTRACT

The employment of college graduates is related to people's well-being, economic development, and the future of the country. It is also related to the practical interests of students and families. The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China has made new arrangements and requirements for promoting the employment of young groups such as college graduates. In recent years, the number of college graduates has been increasing year by year. In response to the severe employment situation, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security have also introduced corresponding preferential policies and measures to help college students' employment. As the main employment group in the talent market, local colleges and universities should further solve the structural contradictions in employment, actively explore effective paths for improvement, take multiple measures, and strengthen the employment work of graduates to improve the quality of student employment.

**Keywords:** Local colleges and universities, Employment of college students, Employment problems, Employment quality.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the implementation of the enrollment expansion policy in Chinese universities in 1999, the annual growth rate of college graduates has been 15%. The number of graduates from ordinary universities in China reached 11.79 million in 2024, setting a new historical high. Affected by economic development and changes in employment concepts, the employment situation for college students is becoming increasingly severe, mainly reflected in two aspects: the first is the external factors, including the continuous increase in the scale of graduates brought about by the expansion of university enrollment, adjustment of industrial structure, changes in employment environment and policies; The second is internal factors, including unclear career planning, immature career psychology, weak employment ability, and lack of practical experience among college students. As

local colleges and universities, facing the new economic and employment situation, they should combine the actual situation of the schools, carefully analyze the reasons, actively study countermeasures, and help graduates solve the "urgent and difficult" problems in job seeking and employment.

## 2. THE EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS FACED BY STUDENTS IN LOCAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

### 2.1 Limited Job Market Due to Geographical Restrictions

Graduates from local colleges and universities are located in small cities at the district or city level, and there is a certain gap in the employment information they obtain compared to graduates

from key universities. For example, in large cities, there are more large-scale talent fairs held annually compared to small cities, and there are more types of recruitment enterprises. Graduates will have a wider range of employment information channels and sources. In addition, society and some employers have certain biases against the educational qualifications of local university graduates, making them candidates for recruitment by employers. And in recent years, the employment standards for graduates from key universities have been lowered, breaking the original employment pattern, and local university graduates face more intense competitive pressure. Due to factors such as geography, resources, and economic development level, the number of high-quality local enterprises is limited, and the employment opportunities provided by recruitment companies are limited, making it difficult to expand employment opportunities.

## **2.2 More Prominent Structural Contradiction Between Employment Supply and Demand**

In recent years, the total employment volume has remained high, and various job seekers are competing in a mixed manner. Currently, the overall employment difficulties for college graduates in China coexist with those of enterprises, highlighting the structural contradiction of imbalanced and insufficient employment supply and demand. Currently, higher education is shifting from elitism to popularization, and local colleges and universities do not have an advantage in terms of student sources. Due to the fact that the training of students in schools is a relatively fixed process, the cycle from the formulation of talent training programs to the specific implementation, and finally to the evaluation of student training results is relatively long. After expanding the enrollment scale, local colleges and universities lack corresponding follow-up policies, and some professional talent training programs cannot quickly adapt to changes in the times and social needs, objectively exacerbating the structural contradiction between employment supply and demand for college students.

## **3. ANALYSIS OF THE REASONS AFFECTING THE EMPLOYMENT OF LOCAL COLLEGE GRADUATES**

### **3.1 Not Optimistic Employment Environment**

The imbalance between supply and demand in the job market has led to an increase in recruitment thresholds. Many enterprises and institutions set stricter requirements for education and graduation institutions when recruiting. Even for positions that are not important or that ordinary undergraduate graduates can handle, recruiting units are more inclined to hire graduates from prestigious universities or graduate students. In addition, in the context of the global economic recession, some companies have had to reduce or cancel job demands when formulating recruitment plans due to outstanding debt pressure. Some companies have even experienced layoffs, resulting in a significant decrease in the absorption rate of the enterprise side. The employment situation faced by local colleges and universities is relatively severe.

### **3.2 Not Outstanding Core Competitiveness of Students**

The situation of two-level differentiation among local college students is quite serious. Some students can quickly adapt to the pace of university life after entering university, with clear goals, and their comprehensive and practical abilities can be greatly improved; However, there is still a portion of students who have poor self-learning abilities and lack clear career plans after entering university. Their knowledge reserves, psychological resilience, social experience, and job seeking experience all have a significant gap compared to students from key universities. Therefore, the overall core competitiveness of local university graduates is not prominent enough.

### **3.3 Deviations Existing in the Self-positioning of Students**

Compared with students from key universities, graduates from local colleges and universities do not fully play their active role as the main body of employment, and their lack of understanding of the employment situation leads to high expectations for work. The concentration of job seeking regions and a single employment orientation mainly consider

factors such as geography, salary and benefits, development opportunities, rest and vacation, and housing subsidies when choosing a career. In addition, the increasing uncertainty of the current economic environment has led to a prominent mentality of seeking stability among some graduates. They have a stronger desire to pursue further education and find employment in government agencies, public institutions, state-owned enterprises and other systems, and are unwilling to go to the grassroots for training, missing out on the employment choice of starting their own businesses from the grassroots. Some graduates do not face significant financial pressure from their families and choose to stay at home after graduation to prepare for the civil service exam and postgraduate entrance examination. This has led to a prominent phenomenon of slow employment and unemployment among graduates, and the school faces significant obstacles in promoting employment work.

### **3.4 Weak Construction of Employment Guidance Faculty**

At present, the teaching staffs of local colleges and universities engaged in employment guidance mainly rely on employment department staff and counselors, with less participation from professional course teachers. Due to the fact that employment guidance teachers mainly focus on majors such as ideological and political education, physical education, and art, which have significant differences from the majors they teach students, they are relatively macro level in providing career planning guidance and innovation and entrepreneurship guidance to students. They cannot combine the majors, industry experience, and school enterprise cooperation resources that students have learned to provide more professional industry, career, and job knowledge to guide students in employment. Moreover, most of them are newly recruited counselors in the past two years, with relatively lack of teaching experience and certain deficiencies in theoretical research, resulting in less than ideal effectiveness of employment and entrepreneurship guidance.

## **4. THE PATHS TO IMPROVING EMPLOYMENT IN LOCAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

The employment quality of college graduates is an important reflection of the quality of school education and talent cultivation. To implement the

spirit of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and promote more full employment of graduates, it is urgent for colleges and universities to further improve their institutional mechanisms, innovate work methods, broaden employment channels, optimize assistance measures, and provide high-quality guidance for employment services for graduates.

### **4.1 Building a Pattern of Full Participation in the "Big Employment" Work Pattern, and Consolidating the Joint Efforts of Employment and Education**

As colleges and universities, it is necessary to prioritize the employment of graduates, further improve the employment promotion mechanism, strengthen overall planning, collaborative linkage, and university responsibilities, and mobilize all parties to form a joint force for promoting employment for all employees. Taking Hubei University of Automotive Technology, where the author works, as an example, the university actively explores new mechanisms for graduate employment work, and reasonably constructs a "big employment" work pattern of "school leadership coordinating the overall situation, employment department leading organization, relevant departments cooperating, secondary colleges implementing layer by layer, and all staff participating together". The school leaders should take the lead in setting an example, participate in the employment work of the college, fully leverage their own advantages, and actively expand high-quality employment positions; The competent department's recruitment department will coordinate and actively plan, utilize the critical and sprinting periods of graduates in job seeking to launch distinctive and targeted special job fairs, actively build a precise platform for employers and graduates to connect. Leaders of various functional departments will leverage their resource advantages to actively promote; The leadership teams of each secondary college are based on the actual situation of the college, adhering to the combination of "going out" and "bringing in", actively promoting visits to enterprises and job opportunities to promote employment; Employment guidance teachers, graduation guidance teachers, and counselors can all participate in employment assistance, ensuring that one person, one policy, and accurately assisting graduates in early employment and good employment.

#### ***4.2 Taking Good Ideological and Political Education for Students as the Starting Point, Promoting the Deep Integration of "Ideological and Political Education + Employment"***

The ideological and political education of college students will directly affect the establishment of their growth values. Effectively integrating ideological and political education with employment guidance education is conducive to helping college students face employment problems more actively and form correct employment and career views. Ideological and political education should be integrated into the career planning and employment guidance of college students, serving them throughout the entire process. Counselors and homeroom teachers should educate graduates on the employment situation through themed class meetings, lectures, and other forms, timely promote national and local employment policies, guide them to have a correct understanding of themselves, their profession, and the current employment environment, encourage them to actively respond to the national call, and make contributions to the grassroots and western regions. In the daily teaching process, professional teachers should consciously integrate ideological and political education into the curriculum, integrate value education into knowledge teaching, combine with the current development trend of the industry, promote industry models, inspire students to strive for progress, help students establish correct career ideals and beliefs, and educate and guide students to actively serve society using what they have learned.

#### ***4.3 Achieving Seamless Integration Between Talent Cultivation and Enterprise Needs Guided by Serving Local Economic Development***

Serving society is an inevitable result of the development of higher education and also a responsibility that local colleges and universities should fulfill. It is necessary for the government, universities, and enterprises to collaborate and promote to achieve a high degree of alignment between the talents cultivated by colleges and universities and the job requirements of enterprises.

As far as the government is concerned, local governments need to comprehensively understand the construction of advantageous disciplines and scientific research progress of local colleges and

universities, in order to grasp the current development status of high-tech industries. A strategic cooperation and communication mechanism should be established between colleges and universities and local governments, with regular exchanges and discussions on economic development, disciplinary construction, and other aspects. The combination of the two should be identified, and suitable joint construction models should be sought to achieve mutual benefit and coordinated development. It is known that the government plays a very important leading role in the construction of regional employment markets. By introducing corresponding policies, attracting investment and attracting foreign enterprises to settle in the region, there is a must simultaneously promote local enterprises to provide more internship and employment opportunities, and create better employment conditions for college graduates.

For enterprises, if they want to quickly recruit the required talents, they can deeply connect with professional universities, participate in the entire process of talent cultivation in advance, from the argumentation of professional talent cultivation plans to the setting of professional core courses, from cooperative teaching in talent cultivation to graduation design, internship guidance from enterprise mentors, and later graduate surveys of employers. The enterprises own needs and opinions are important considerations in talent cultivation. For example, Suzhou Jinlong Higer Bus Co., Ltd. and Hubei University of Automotive Technology actively explore the "order based" talent training model, jointly establish three "Higer classes", focus on applied talent training, closely connect with regional economic and social development needs, jointly develop courses, build research and development platforms, and jointly cultivate students.

Local colleges and universities should take it as their responsibility to serve local economic and social development. The cultivation of their characteristic majors should be guided by "local characteristics", actively adapt to local and industry development, and optimize the layout of professional institutions. In terms of educational philosophy, it should be guided by meeting the needs of local enterprises, focusing on providing talent protection for the local area, attracting more talents to stay in the local area, and serving the local economy. For example, Hubei University of Automotive Technology is rooted in the automotive industry and focuses on optimizing the professional

layout of six undergraduate professional groups, namely "Advanced Automotive Design, New Automotive Materials, Intelligent Automotive Manufacturing, Intelligent Automotive Control, Intelligent Automotive Networking, and Intelligent Automotive Services". It creates a cluster of automotive characteristic majors that meets the new needs of industrial optimization and upgrading, forming a disciplinary and professional layout with automotive, materials, control, and machinery as the backbone, management, and information humanities as the support, covering the entire automotive industry. The school has actively improved the mechanism of integrating industry and education among the government, enterprises, and schools, and jointly promoted the innovation of functional models such as subject and professional co construction, resource platform sharing, talent and teacher co-education, engineering time innovation, scientific and technological joint research and development, and technological achievement transformation. The school has also deeply explored the potential of "characteristic education", "industry education", and "industry education", opened up the resource expansion path of industry promotion of employment, explored new employment growth points from industry development, and opened up employment main channels with our school's characteristics based on its own characteristics. In 2021, Hubei University of Automotive Technology will liberate its educational philosophy, break geographical limitations, actively explore the model of cooperation between different real estate learning and research bases such as Wuhan and Xiangyang, send senior students to the bases for learning and internships, and deepen cooperation with local enterprises, effectively promoting the organic connection between the talent training chain and the local industrial chain, and attracting more graduates to serve the local automotive industry and economic and social development.

#### ***4.4 Enhancing the "Driving Force" of Student Employment with the Aim of Strengthening the Awareness of Student Participation as the Main Body***

Firstly, to enhance students' subjective understanding, it is necessary to organize them to participate in professional knowledge internships and subject competitions in lower grades, enhance their understanding of the profession and

confidence in learning, discover their interests and strengths, form their own employment advantages, and enhance their core competitiveness in employment. Secondly, it is also necessary to enhance students' awareness of participation, encourage them to actively participate in career planning competitions, resume design competitions, simulated job search competitions and other employment ability training activities, and gradually improve their personal employment skills through active participation. Thirdly, there is a must to enhance students' awareness of active exploration, fully leverage the role of the second classroom in educating students, carry out rich and colorful team learning brand activities in combination with the professional characteristics of the college, guide and help students establish strong adaptive employment concepts, optimize knowledge structure in the process of self-practice and exploration, clarify their own development direction, improve their comprehensive quality and ability to match future job positions.

#### ***4.5 Taking Multiple Measures to Effectively Combine Employment Guidance and Caring Assistance with the Goal of Helping Students Establish a Correct Employment Concept***

Faced with the increasing employment willingness of graduates within the system in recent years and the high proportion of slow employment, local colleges and universities should actively change their work ideas and scientifically explore effective work methods suitable for contemporary college students.

The first is to strengthen the role of employment guidance courses in employment guidance. The employment guidance course should shift from theoretical teaching to practical employment, emphasizing the transmission of experience and skills, emphasizing the training of job seeking and employment, helping students develop professional thinking, improve job seeking skills, and make good career planning. Enterprise CEOs, executives with practical experience, and professional technical personnel can be hired to give lectures on campus, allowing students to understand the development status and operation mode of the enterprise in advance, and then clarify the practical abilities that match future positions. The second is to establish a pre-employment assistance and guidance system, and conduct pre-screening and assistance for students facing employment

difficulties. Based on the different characteristics and needs of students, the schools should provide policies, guidance, and information in advance to help them change their employment concepts and enhance their employability. Based on the different characteristics and needs of students, the schools should also provide policies, guidance, and information in advance to help them change their employment concepts and enhance their employability. The third is to build a differentiated employment guidance platform. It is necessary to analyze the job seeking situation of students from different majors, provide targeted employment guidance and assistance based on the characteristics of different student groups, and actively build an online and offline supply and demand docking platform. The fourth is to actively leverage the advantages of alumni resources and gather the strength of alumni to promote employment. Through in-depth cooperation with alumni enterprises, there is a must to strengthen job internships and employment base construction, and enrich employment resources. At the same time, alumni are invited to return to their alma mater to share their experiences in employment and entrepreneurship, helping younger students establish a correct employment outlook.

As a key employment group, discussions on the employment issues of college graduates have always been of great concern. According to incomplete statistics, the number of graduates trained by local universities each year accounts for over 90% of the total number of college graduates in China. The quality of employment for local college graduates directly affects the overall situation of employment for college graduates in the country. As the main force of higher education in China, local colleges and universities shoulder the important mission of cultivating talents and serving local economic and social development. Based on the diversified demand for talents in various industries and fields in the current labor market, as a local university, it is a necessity to accurately grasp the positioning of education, strengthen "local" and "application-oriented" education, deepen the integration of industry and education, expand employment channels, make full use of employment and entrepreneurship policies, and comprehensively promote the full employment and high-quality employment of graduates.

## 5. CONCLUSION

College graduates are a valuable talent resource for the country and an important group for promoting employment. In this study, the author has conducted an in-depth exploration and analysis of the employment problems faced by local universities. Taking Hubei University of Automotive Technology as an example, this article summarized the paths for local colleges and universities to enhance employment. This conclusion has important theoretical and practical significance for promoting employment in colleges and universities. At the same time, it can be also realized that there are still some shortcomings in this study that need to be further improved in future research. It is hoped that the research results of this article can provide some useful references and inspirations for researchers and practitioners in related fields.

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