

# Research on Causes and Countermeasures for the Difference between Employment Expectation and Actual Employment of College Graduates

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**Abstract.** As the career choice of college graduates, employment expectation is the reflection of many college graduates' career goals and also impacts career selection of college graduates to some extent. However, employment expectation and actual employment of college graduates has a large difference in workplace, job type and starting salary. The paper analyzes causes for the difference between employment expectation and actual employment of college graduates from macroenvironment, colleges, employers and graduates, proposes countermeasures on shrinking the difference between employment expectation and actual employment of college graduates, and provides reference for alleviating the contradiction between college graduates and social employment demands.

## Introduction

Employment of college graduates has the tendency to increase year by year. With the constant development of reform of the economic system in China and transformation of employment mechanism, the actual employment environment of college graduates is increasingly severe. The employment status of supply exceeding demand has already become the real portrayal of employment environment for college graduates. In numerous factors that result in difficult employment of college graduates, as the career choice of college graduates, employment expectation is the reflection of many college graduates' career goals and also impacts career selection of college graduates to some extent. However, employment expectation and actual employment of college graduates has a large difference in workplace, job type and starting salary. The paper conducts high-level analysis of causes for the difference between employment expectation and actual employment of college graduates and contributes to increasing self-adaptive ability for college graduates to better adapt to the current employment environment, so as to alleviate the contradiction between college graduates and social employment demands.

## Literature Review

**The Concept of Employment Expectation.** In recent years, employment expectation has received attention of the increasing number of scholars. Zeng Xiangchang(2007) thought that employment expectation is also called as employment anticipation and is the individual tendency to employment, including self-expectation and anticipation on possible employment, types of employment and development achievements. Gao Fei(2012) regards employment expectation as an objective reflection on subjective employment psychology of college students. It embodies students' cognition on themselves, families, employment market, investments in human capital and

education pays. The study thinks that employment expectation is the individual attitude tendency to employment, including possible employment, employers of employment, industrial types and territorial conception. It is an important component in the career planning. The matching degree between conception and reality shows that whether it can realize employment aspiration and employment quality.

**Literature Review.** Overseas scholars have already carried out relatively abundant study on the job expectancy of college students. In 1908, the Professor Frank Parsons in Boston University firstly came up with the trait and factor theory of “person-position fit”. Ginzburg et al., put forward the model of career development theory. They thought that career development can be divided into three stages: fantastic stage(before 11 years old), trial sub stage(11-18 years old), and realistic stage(18-20 years old). The realistic stage conducts self-inspection, role identification and career exploration, career completion and preliminary employment through school learning and hope to connect their occupation with personal interests and ability through systematic education in a school and personal work. Tiedemann and Hari proposed the career development theory and thought that the process of career selection can be divided into two stages, including expectation and practice. In the expectation stage, people know about their interests, ability and career world based on abundant explorative activities and gradually establish a kind of state of coordinating and unifying people and work. Hoppock came up with the theory that career selection must be connected with individual demands. He thought that different societies are different individuals in groups. Due to different family background, education, and individual state, their individual job expectancy also differs from one another. The level of individual need hierarchy determines the high-low job expectancy.

In recent years, with the constantly prominent of “employment difficulty” for college students, domestic scholars also gradually increase the study on employment expectation. Lots of empirical studies start noticing the composition of college students’ employment expectation and its influences, as well as the relation among college students’ employment expectation, actual employment, and acquisition of occupational status. Zeng Xiangchang(2009) conducted analytical study on the relevance between employment expectation and actual employment of college students. Zhu Mei et al (2012) carried out research review on influences of college students’ employment expectation. Gao Fei(2012) studied the difference between employment expected incomes and actual incomes. It can be observed from literatures that domestic scholars mainly concentrate on studying employment expectation of expected incomes and actual salaries, but it is obviously enough to analyze causes for the difference between employment expectation and actual employment.

## **Causes for the Difference between Employment Expectation and Actual Employment of College Graduates**

**Macro Influence Factors.** From the perspective of the entire labor market, various talent flows are increasingly frequent, and talent competition is also increasingly fierce. Though urban isolation is weakening gradually, all kinds of systematic barriers, such as census register, in labor market of China still forms labor market segmentation, especially for Shanghai and Beijing, etc., megalopolis. Earnings of labor market segmentation inevitably will result in excessive concentration of college students’ employment expectation, so as to cause the difference between employment expectation and actual employment of college students.

Meantime, the supply-demand relationship in labor market of undergraduates also has changed. 2003 has been ushered the first peak time of undergraduate employment, since colleges started to increase enrollment greatly in 1999. Recently, higher education in China has been developed

rapidly. Compared with 2002, graduates in 2003 have been increased by 46.2%, while graduates in 2004 have been increased by 32.1% comparing to 2003. The increase of college graduates also has been about 30% until 2015(Pan Lili, 2009). However, the current social market has no big change for total demands of graduates. There is the coexistence of structural contradictions and the contradiction of total demands. Under the circumstance, Higher expectation of graduates will generate a contradiction with the severe employment situation, so as to generate the difference between employment expectation and actual employment.

**Influence Factors of Employers.** Under the current background of social economy, the rate of economic development in China slows down gradually. All walks of life present the weak development trend. Therefore, based on the fundamental interests of enterprises, employers shorten the absorptive quantity of newbie in enterprises step by step. Moreover, recruitment and appointment of personnel adopt a relatively strict screening method. In addition, with the gradual change of employment structure in China, most of employers strive for industry restructuring positively to acquire a new interest growth point, resulting in a huge contradiction between talent demands in all walks of life and structure of knowledge and skills for training students in colleges. Currently, the employment market completion of college graduates has already been inclined to the sellers' market from the buyer's market. The leading role of college graduates in the employment market has been losing gradually. College students also gradually turn to the public from elites. Employers will select talents more rationally and also have higher requirements for individual quality of college students. They don't pursue for talent quantity as before anymore, but pay more attention to comprehensive quality of college students.

Furthermore, lots of employments have more or less mistakes, when they select talents. For example, they may lay emphasis on diploma too much. A great number of employers aren't provided with the complete human resource management system. They don't know what kind of talents do they want, and they are lack of scientific analysis of their own human resource state, but they just think that higher education background will be better. Evaluation and talent selection think highly of education background or only care about education background. The education-oriented selection results in inadaptation between level and ability of employees and post demands, so as to cause waste of human resources.

In addition, a majority of employers transmit recruitment information of enterprises to graduates too one-sided. There is lack of the standardized and effective information transfer channel, resulting in lowering attraction of employers to college graduates. The cooperation degree between universities and enterprises is still kept in a lower stage. Information transfer channels are narrow. Changes of market human resource structure can't be reported to schools in time, resulting in disconnection between school professional teaching and social reality. Thus, it can't satisfy actual human resource demands of employers, but it enlarges costs for human resource recruitment of employers invisibly.

**Influence Factors of College Graduates' Families.** Family environment and members also have great influences on employment expectation and actual employment selection of college graduates. With the constant implementation of family planning policy in these years in China, the proportion of only child is increasingly high in undergraduates. The features of only child bring about loose family environment, so most of them are lacking of experience in hard life, short of self-defensive ability, ability to adapt to society, interpersonal skill ability and psychological enduring capacity. Meanwhile, with the improvement of college education costs, families have stronger aspiration to hope college students to acquire higher returns, resulting in enlarging difference of level between employment expectation and actual employment. Impacted by family

environment, employment expectation of some college graduates is still out of touch. The expectation lags behind changes of employment situations, but pursue for higher incomes and high welfare too one-sided, especially for small and medium-sized private enterprises and private non-enterprise organizations, they still have hesitation. Moreover, they take a wait-and-see attitude towards entrepreneurship. Besides, some college graduates are short of comprehensive and correct cognition on the society and lack of improving their capacity and cultivating basic skills of employment, resulting in lower comprehensive quality and innovative ability, insufficient market competitive capacity, and inadaptation to demands of market competition.

**College Education Training Modes and Influence Factors in Employment Guidance.** With the constant development of economic globalization and marketization, competition is increasingly fierce. The dramatic improvement of employers on the valuing degree of graduates' specialized knowledge and comprehensive quality inevitably will enlarge the demand difference between graduates of different majors. However, the reaction speed of changing market requirements is relatively slow. Major adjustment, course setting, and talent training modes have a certain gap with social demands. In this way, it will intensify the structural contradictions of employment market, so as to impact the realization degree of college students' employment expectation (Pan Lili, 2009).

College employment guidance transmits employment information to college graduates and helps college students to know about post requirements of different occupations in the society and fully comprehend their own personalities, so as to help college students to find out the operating post conforming to their expectation. Under the situation of no optimistic situation, college employment guidance has great significance on college students. At present, the employment guidance course in a lot of colleges has no a set of complete teaching system, but guidance time is short and setting time lags behind career selection of college students. Moreover, employment guidance has no originality, so it is hard to arouse interests of college students, resulting in unobvious effects of employment guidance.

As a link connecting graduates with social demands, college employment guidance service organization plays an irreplaceable role on reinforcing the communication between employers and higher education, guiding the concept of graduate employment, helping graduates to know about employment market, and increasing their employment ability. However, according to the current situation, the colleges' strength of education and guidance on employment attitude of graduates is insufficient. Employment information channels are obstructed. In addition, colleges have no sufficient autonomy in running schools, resulting in parts of disconnection among cultivation, teaching and professional setting of colleges and social demands. Generally speaking, undergraduate education has one cycle of four years, while demand changing speed of enterprises on professional and technical personnel and management personnel is 2.4 times of college personnel training. Thus, time difference in talent supply-demand market is formed for this reason.

### **Countermeasures on Shortening the Difference between Employment Expectation and Actual Employment of College Graduates**

**Reinforcing the Regulation and Guidance of Governmental Macro Policies.** It is necessary to speed continuous and stable development of economy, break labor market segmentation gradually, reduce segmented incomes, and desalt various benefits behind census register, so as to support labor force to select occupation in a wider range. The government should reinforce the rate of economic development, development prospect of various industries, and perspective prediction of higher education talent demands, so as to provide references for major setup in colleges and reform of education and teaching and provide correct information for college students to know

about social needs. Education departments in provinces should analyze in line with employment industry, occupation and salary of college students, offer guidance and consultation to students who participate in college entrance examination, and reduce the blindness of investments in knowledge-based human capital.

Besides, the government should reinforce policy guidance and propaganda, perfect preferential policies of encouraging college graduates to work in the western China and remote places, enlarge propaganda work, publicize policies of party and government to make college graduates work in grass roots deeply through media, greatly publicize advanced models of grass-roots entrepreneurship talents in colleges, sing the theme of making contributions to the grass roots, the western China and the motherland, form the good guidance of public opinions in the whole society, encourage and support for college graduates to do grass-roots entrepreneurship and flexible employment.

Furthermore, governments at all levels should create more employment posts and employment opportunities for college students and supply local enterprises with more preferential policies. For instances, for enterprises that have a certain proportion of recruiting graduating students, governments can give certain taxation or expense deduction to enterprises and encourage enterprises to recruit graduating colleges. At the same time, it is necessary to establish a perfect information platform of employment market for college students, broaden household registration policy comprehensively, and provide in-time employer recruitment information for graduates. Governments also should assist schools to know about economic and social development strategies and plans. Colleges should concentrate on the tendency and demands of economic and social development to run a school and cultivate talents, especially major setup, outmoded professional transformation and reform of training mode, etc., and help college students to plan their career development reasonably.

**College Students Should Change the Employment Concept Positively, Set up the Public Employment Attitude, and Pay Attention to Improving Their Comprehensive Quality.** The arrival of the public education era requires college students to adjust their employment attitude and employment expectation, recognize themselves correctly, realize social functional requirements, and capture their social positioning of employment. This not only conforms to the primary task of higher education, but also accords with requirements of employers and development of college students. Whether undergraduates can realize employment expectation has the most critical factor, namely individual knowledge quality.

College graduates should pay attention to improving comprehensive quality, accumulate human capital constantly, prepare for career planning, and form the correct expectation. College students should try to improve the level of human capital. This requires college students to coordinate the first class and the second class. On the one hand, they should lay the foundation, reinforce professional learning and increase knowledge reserve. On the other hand, they should take an active part in activities of the second class, such as act as student cadre, participate in internship, and increase practice ability. Accumulation of two classrooms contributes to broadening students' horizon, having clear cognition on situations of employment or further study, making clear self-positioning, and forming correct employment expectation.

In school, college students should attach importance to learning and mastering professional knowledge, improve their professional and technical level, coordinate with schools to compete in corresponding practice activities, look for chances positively, participate in various practices, accumulate related working experience, know well with working process, and learn interpersonal skills to increase weights on the future employment competition. In addition, college students

should also adjust employment mentality, estimate themselves realistically, and define self-positioning accurately.

**Human Resource Structure of Employers Should Coordinate with Actual Situations of College Graduates.** Employers should attach importance to employment of college students, increase sense of social responsibility and sense of mission for colleges, and share social responsibility of college students actively. First of all, employers should establish scientific employment standards. Employment mechanism and value idea are critical factors of determine whether college graduates can development talents and potential. Nowadays, talent attraction and reserve have already become the key to decide success or failure of enterprises in market competition. For employers, it is necessary to regard employment of college students as the most important human resource development to work, use new idea and new method of human resource management in domestic and overseas advanced enterprises for reference, forge a stable talent team by establishing scientific and reasonable talent training plans, make college graduates become valuable talent resources of employers, and lay a solid foundation on reserve of talents, so as to hold superiority in the increasingly fierce market competition and win in the future. Secondly, facing to the situation of coexisting the demand contradiction of college graduates and structural contradictions, employers should intensify the communication with schools and establish complete channels for communication and feedback. Colleges and enterprises should cooperate together and guide daily life and social practice of college students reasonably to cultivate skills and mentality that are suitable for social employment demands.

In addition, the cognition on welfare salary of most of graduates mainly comes from enterprise recruitment fair, so information channels of knowing about employers are too narrow. Therefore, this greatly impacts attraction of employers and employment rate of college graduates. As a result, employers should reinforce cooperation with schools, establish comprehensive and effective information channels, reinforce the communication between employers and graduates, so as to reduce damages of both parties brought by unblocked information and realize a win-win situation.

**Reinforcing the Innovation of College Education Training Modes.** Institutions of higher learning should adjust major setup scientifically, increase social practice links, and perfect employment service system of graduates. First of all, it must adjust major setup in accordance with employment information feedback of graduates, plan the number of recruitment for various majors, and live up to cultivate suitable talents. Secondly, it should confirm the market-oriented and quality-first teaching training mode, strengthen the professional teaching with pertinence in line with requirements of broad profession, heavy foundation, and flexible professional direction, as well as demand changes of employment market, and increase actual employment ability of graduates effectively. This not only should develop subject comprehensive superiority and ability to develop and update, but also should embody characteristics of undergraduate professionals.

Then, it is necessary to guide college students to utilize winter and summer vacations to throw themselves into social practice actively, lengthen time of social practice, and establish a long-term cooperative relation with employers. Practice teaching is an important component of college teaching system. On the one hand, it can reinforce college students' understanding on theoretical knowledge. On the other hand, it also strengthens the application of college students on theoretical knowledge and cultivates the ability to solve actual problems. Therefore, it is necessary to reinforce the guidance and supervision of social practice and improve effects of practice teaching. In addition, it also needs to arrange graduates to intern as a whole, reinforce planning and standardization of the link, strengthen communications with internship organizations, value problems presented in internship, report and solve them in time.

Thirdly, schools should establish professional employment service system and complete transmit between graduates and employers in accordance with labor market and combine with actual situations of colleges. Meanwhile, schools should train employment skills and promote employment success rate of college students. Colleges should reinforce service and guidance of graduates, carry out career planning education, stand on the career development of students, guide students to plan career life scientifically and systematically in line with characteristics, reduce blindness of learning and employment, and carry out classification guidance. Facing to different selections and demands for graduate school exam, examination of civil servants, and actual employment in undergraduates, schools should intervene in advance, reinforce occupational quality and social practice ability of undergraduates, and try to cultivate undergraduates into professionals with wide basic knowledge and strong practical ability, so as to adapt to requirements of wide employment path. Meanwhile, schools should adapt to new requirements of economic development, perfect employment service information system of college students, connect with enterprises and various talent service organizations, look for new employment space and promote unblocked employment information.

Besides, teaching content determines the biggest boundary for college students to acquire knowledge and skills. In other words, college students can be translated into stock of human capital by being provided more knowledge and skills by colleges and efforts of college students. There is a relatively general phenomenon of lagging teaching contents in colleges, so knowledge and skills learned by college students have a certain gap with requirements of employers. In order to alleviate the phenomenon of college students' employment difficulty, it must reform teaching contents, so as to improve the connection with employers, and update theoretical contents in time.

## **Conclusions**

The employment of college graduates has already become the hotspot widely concerned by the whole society. It is one of ten social problems in next ten years. As the occupational selection orientation of college graduates, employment expectation is the reflection of occupational idea for lots of college graduates and impacts the employment behaviors of college graduates to some extent. The larger difference between employment expectation and actual employment of college graduates is composed of multiple factors. If we want to shorten the difference between employment expectation and actual employment of college graduates and solve employment difficulty of college students gradually, it needs multiple efforts in macro policies, higher education, employers and graduates.

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