

# Interpreting and Governing the "Slow Employment" Phenomenon among College Students: A Perspective on the Transformation of Society's Primary Contradiction

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**Abstract:** As society's primary contradiction evolves, the "slow employment" phenomenon among college students has become increasingly prominent. This paper explores the implications of this societal shift, examining the concept, manifestations, causes, and impacts of "slow employment." Governance strategies are proposed at three levels—government, universities, and families—to foster more comprehensive, high-quality employment opportunities for college graduates.

**Keywords:** primary contradiction in society, college students, delayed employment, governance strategy

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## Introduction

"Slow employment" among college graduates refers to the trend of delaying immediate entry into the workforce post-graduation. This may involve choosing to pursue further studies, engage in travel, participate in volunteer activities, or undertake other temporary pursuits instead of immediate employment. There are various forms of expression, such as not immediately working after graduation, choosing study tours, conducting entrepreneurial assessments, and frequently changing internships. Against the backdrop of the transformation of the main contradiction in society, the phenomenon of "slow employment" among college students is becoming increasingly prominent. The in-depth study of the phenomenon of "slow employment" among college students in the context of the transformation of the main social contradictions has important theoretical and practical significance.

### 1. The impact of the transformation of the main contradiction in society on the employment of college students

#### 1.1 The connotation and manifestation of the transformation of the main contradiction in society

The growing demand for a better life for the people requires diverse, multi-level, and multi-faceted characteristics. Not only have higher requirements been put forward for material and cultural life, but the demands for democracy, rule of law, fairness, justice, safety, environment, and other aspects are also increasing day by day. In the field of employment, this demand is manifested as college students no longer being satisfied with just finding a job to make a living, but paying more attention to the quality of work, career development prospects, work life balance, and the realization of personal value. The uneven and insufficient development is more evident in terms of employment. From a regional perspective, employment

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opportunities are relatively abundant in the eastern coastal areas and big cities, while employment opportunities are relatively scarce in the central and western regions and rural areas. From the perspective of industrial structure, traditional industries are facing transformation and upgrading, and employment growth is slow, while emerging industries such as the Internet, artificial intelligence, big data, etc. are developing rapidly, with strong demand for high-quality talents, but talent supply is relatively insufficient. From the perspective of the matching degree between education and employment, some universities' majors are out of touch with market demand, resulting in a mismatch between the majors studied by college students and their job positions.

## **1.2 The impact on college students' employment concepts and expectations**

The transformation of the main contradiction in society has led to significant changes in the employment concepts and expectations of college students. In the past, college students' employment often focused more on material benefits such as wages and benefits. Nowadays, they are paying more and more attention to spiritual satisfaction, pursuing the combination of personal interests and careers, and placing greater emphasis on career development space, comfortable working environment, and the realization of personal value. They aspire to continuously improve their abilities, gain a sense of achievement and respect in their work, while also hoping that their work can bring them joy and meaning in life. This shift in mindset is beneficial for college students to fully unleash their potential and achieve comprehensive personal development; On the other hand, it may also lead to some college students being overly idealistic when it comes to employment, demanding high working conditions and benefits, thereby increasing the difficulty of employment.<sup>[1]</sup>

## **1.3 Changes and challenges in the job market**

With the rapid development of technology, emerging industries continue to emerge, providing a large number of innovative employment opportunities for college students. For example, in the Internet field, there is a strong demand for software development, data analysis, online marketing and other posts; In the field of new energy, there is also a need for a large number of professional talents in research and development, production, management, and other aspects. In contrast, traditional industries such as manufacturing and construction have relatively low technological content, obvious labor-intensive characteristics, slow job growth, and face personnel adjustment pressure brought about by transformation and upgrading. This requires college students to have strong learning abilities and innovative spirit, timely pay attention to the development trends of emerging industries, continuously improve their professional skills and comprehensive qualities, in order to adapt to changes in the job market. In addition, the regional economic development in our country is unbalanced. The eastern region has a developed economy, abundant employment opportunities, and high salaries, which has attracted a large number of talents to flow in; However, the economy in the central and western regions is relatively backward, with relatively few employment opportunities and serious talent loss. The uneven development of this region has led to unequal employment opportunities and increased the difficulty for college students to find employment. In order to alleviate this problem, the government has introduced a series of policies to encourage college students to work in the central and western regions and at the grassroots level, such as the "Three Supports and One Assistance" and "Western Plan". College students should also establish a correct employment concept, be brave enough to go to the places where the country needs it most, and contribute their own strength to regional coordinated development.<sup>[2]</sup>

## **2. Interpretation of the phenomenon of "slow employment" among college students**

### **2.1 Analysis of the reasons for the formation of "slow employment"**

#### **2.1.1 Personal factors**

Firstly, the lack of personal career planning awareness and ability among college students is one of the important reasons for "slow employment". During their university years, some students fail to fully understand themselves and lack a clear understanding of their interests, abilities, and career goals, leading to confusion and perplexity when choosing a career after graduation. As a result, they choose not to work temporarily to reflect on and explore their future development direction. Secondly, some college students pursue higher education and professional skills, hoping to enhance their competitiveness through postgraduate entrance exams, doctoral entrance exams, and participating in training, in order to

obtain better career development opportunities. This pursuit of knowledge and skills leads them to actively choose 'slow employment'. In addition, the personality traits and values of some college students also influence their employment decisions. For example, some students have a strong spirit of innovation and adventure, and are more willing to try entrepreneurship or engage in freelance work, forming a "slow employment" in the process of preparation and experimentation.<sup>[3]</sup>

### **2.1.2 Family factors**

The improvement of family economic conditions provides a certain material foundation for college students' "slow employment". Nowadays, many families are able to financially support their children in not rushing to find employment after graduation, giving them more time to search for ideal jobs or engage in self-improvement. Meanwhile, the educational beliefs and expectations of families also have an impact on the employment attitudes of college students. Some parents excessively spoil their children and lack proper guidance and supervision on their employment, resulting in their children being more casual and not eager to find employment. Some families have high career expectations for their children, hoping that they can find a stable, high paying, and decent job. This makes college students too picky in the job search process, and once they fail to find a job that meets their expectations, they choose "slow employment".

### **2.1.3 Social factors**

The current job market is highly competitive and faces significant employment pressure. The large number of college graduates each year, coupled with relatively limited high-quality job opportunities, makes it difficult for many college students to find satisfactory jobs in a short period of time. The severity of this employment situation has forced some college students to adopt a "slow employment" strategy in order to wait for better job opportunities. In addition, the shift in social attitudes has also provided some public support for "slow employment". With the development of society, people are becoming increasingly tolerant of the diversity and individualization of career choices, and no longer regard "graduation as employment" as the only criterion for success, which to some extent reduces the pressure of immediate employment for college graduates.<sup>[4]</sup>

### **2.1.4 Educational factors**

There is a certain disconnect between the professional settings and course content of universities and market demand, which leads to some college students having difficulty adapting to market demand after graduation and needing to spend time relearning and training, resulting in a situation of "slow employment". At the same time, the employment guidance work in universities is not comprehensive enough, and there is insufficient guidance on students' career planning and job seeking skills, which makes many students feel confused and helpless about employment when they graduate, and do not know how to choose and cope.

## **2.2 The impact of 'slow employment'**

### **2.2.1 Positive impact**

Slow employment provides college students with more time and space to think about their career plans, helping them to have a clearer understanding of their interests and abilities, and thus find a more suitable career direction for themselves. It also provides an opportunity for college students to improve themselves. During the "slow employment" period, they can improve their professional skills and comprehensive qualities, and enhance their employment competitiveness through participating in training, internships, certification, and other means. In addition, 'slow employment' can help alleviate employment pressure and prevent college students from blindly seeking employment. Through a period of sedimentation and selection, the supply and demand in the job market can be more matched, and the quality of employment can be improved.

### **2.2.2 Negative impact**

Slow employment "may lead to a disconnection between college students and society. Being unemployed for a long time will gradually make them lose their enthusiasm and initiative for work, and their ability to adapt to society will also

decrease. For students from families with average economic conditions, "slow employment" will increase the financial burden on their families and bring certain pressure to them. From a social perspective, 'slow employment' has to some extent caused a waste of human resources, which is not conducive to the development of the social economy. At the same time, it may also raise doubts about the employment ability and attitude of college students in society, affecting the overall image of the college student population.

## **2.3 Strategies for addressing the phenomenon of "slow employment" among college students**

### **2.3.1 At the government level**

The government should strengthen macroeconomic regulation, optimize employment policies and market environment. On the one hand, formulate and improve policies and regulations to promote the employment of college students, increase support for small and medium-sized enterprises and emerging industries, and encourage them to absorb more college students for employment. By offering tax incentives, financial subsidies, and other means, companies can reduce their labor costs and increase their enthusiasm for recruiting college students. On the other hand, strengthening the supervision of the labor market, regulating recruitment behavior, and safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of college students. At the same time, the government should further improve the employment service system, build an efficient employment information platform, timely release accurate and comprehensive employment information, and promote effective docking between the supply and demand sides of employment.

### **2.3.2 At the university level**

Universities should strengthen employment guidance and education work. Firstly, optimize the professional settings to closely align with market demand, avoiding blind and outdated professional settings. Strengthen curriculum reform, focus on cultivating students' practical abilities and innovative spirit, and enhance their employment competitiveness. Secondly, strengthen the construction of the employment guidance faculty team and provide personalized and professional employment guidance services for students. Starting from the freshman year, career planning education is carried out in stages and with targeted measures to help students establish correct employment concepts and career development goals. Furthermore, actively expanding employment channels, strengthening cooperation with enterprises, establishing internship and training bases, and providing students with more practical opportunities and employment positions.

### **2.3.3 At the family level**

Families should provide college students with reasonable expectations and support. Firstly, it is necessary to establish a correct employment concept and provide reasonable support and guidance. Parents should abandon traditional employment concepts, respect their children's career choices, and encourage them to find suitable jobs based on their own interests and abilities. Secondly, objective employment information and advice should be provided to help children rationally analyze the employment situation and their own conditions. Cultivate children's sense of independence and responsibility. In daily life, it is important to cultivate children's independence and sense of responsibility, so that they can think independently, make decisions independently, and take on responsibilities when facing employment issues. Do not intervene too much in children's employment choices, allowing them to grow and develop through practice.

### **2.3.4 At the individual level of college students**

College students should actively and proactively respond to employment. Firstly, it is necessary to enhance self-awareness and clarify career goals. College students should conduct in-depth analysis and evaluation of their interests, abilities, personality, and other aspects to understand their strengths and weaknesses. On this basis, combined with social needs and personal development vision, clarify career goals and development directions. Actively participate in practical activities to enhance employment competitiveness. Make full use of spare time to participate in practical projects such as club activities, volunteer services, internships, etc., to exercise one's communication skills, teamwork skills, and problem-solving abilities. At the same time, by participating in various competitions and certifications, one can enhance their professional level and overall quality. Adjust mentality and establish a correct employment concept. Overcoming impatience and anxiety, recognizing that employment is a gradual process of development. Establish the concept of first

seeking employment and then choosing a career, not blindly pursuing high salaries and comfortable working environments, starting from grassroots positions, accumulating experience, and gradually realizing career ideals.

### **3. Conclusion**

In summary, the transformation of the main contradiction in society has brought new opportunities and challenges to the employment of college students. College students should have a profound understanding of this change, adjust their employment concepts and expectations in a timely manner, continuously improve their own qualities, and adapt to the needs of the new era's job market. The government and universities should strengthen employment guidance and services, optimize industrial structure, promote regional coordinated development, and create more and better employment opportunities for college students. Only through joint efforts from all parties can we achieve full employment and high-quality employment for college students, injecting strong talent power into the realization of the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

### **Conflicts of interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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