

Survey on Psychological Stress in Employment of College Students and Study on Countermeasures to Reduce Stress

--Taking Qingdao Binhai University as an Example

Qingling Cui, Shoushun Zhang and Dongchao Luo

School of Foreign Languages, Qingdao Binhai University, Qingdao 266555, China.

Abstract

In the era of popularisation of higher education, the number of university graduates is increasing year by year. Due to the challenges in all aspects, the employment pressure of college students is getting bigger and bigger. How to help college students to enhance the ability of stress resistance and self-regulation of pressure, and take effective measures to alleviate the psychological pressure of employment has become one of the important concerns in the work of employment in colleges and universities. This paper puts forward the strategies and methods to alleviate the psychological pressure of college students' employment by investigating and analysing the psychological pressure of college students' employment in Qingdao Binhai University, so as to promote the smooth employment of college students and effectively improve the quality of college students' employment.

Keywords

College students, employment psychological pressure, alleviation, countermeasures.

1. Introduction

Data released by the Ministry of Education show that the gross enrolment rate of higher education in China has increased from 30 percent in 2012 to 57.8 percent in 2021, and higher education has entered the universally accepted stage. After the era of universalisation, the number of college graduates has increased year by year, and at the same time, in recent years, due to China's economic development has entered a new normal, the development speed has slowed down, the problem of supply and demand of talents has been highlighted, and the phenomenon of difficulty in employment of college students has been intensified, which has led to the psychological pressure of college students' employment has been increasing. How to alleviate the employment pressure on college students and improve their self-regulation ability requires college students, families, schools and the society to strengthen the linkage, make a synergy, and seek for effective ways to alleviate the pressure, so as to help college students to have a smooth employment and healthy development.

2. Psychological pressure on university students to find employment

Employment psychology of college students refers to the general psychological characteristics shown by college students in the employment process, which is a kind of psychological stereotypes and emotional tendency towards employment behaviour formed on the basis of college students' understanding of self, employment and society, etc.^[1].

Employment psychological stress of college students refers to the physiological and psychological reactions of college students in the process of employment, when the external requirements exceed the individual's ability or are difficult to cope with under the individual's ability to put in efforts^[2].

3. The current situation of employment pressure on university students

Statistics from the Ministry of Education show that the total number of college graduates from 2016-2023 has increased significantly year by year, and the scale of college graduates in 2023 is expected to reach 11.58 million, which is a record high both in terms of scale and number. Relevant data show that in recent years, the number of jobs provided by society for college graduates has been declining year by year, while the number of college graduates has been increasing year by year, coupled with the fact that people and jobs can't be fully matched, resulting in an imbalance between supply and demand. At present, the graduates of the class of 2023 have flooded into the job-seeking market, together with the former graduates who have not been employed during the 2-3 years of job-seeking period, as well as the graduates who have returned to their home countries after studying abroad, it is expected that there will be 15 million graduates competing for job opportunities, and the difficulty of employment is self-evident that the employment situation is exceptionally grim, and the increase in the difficulty of employment will inevitably add a great deal of psychological pressure on the graduates.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the psychological stress situation of college students, a sample survey was conducted on 666 graduates of Qingdao Binhai University in the class of 2023. The content of the survey and research mainly contains the psychological stress situation of employment, psychological stress tolerance, the symptomatic manifestation of employment stress, the way of employment stress relief, and the source of employment psychological stress. SPSS20.0 software package was used to process the survey data for statistical analysis. The psychological stress situation of college students' employment is analyzed from the data as follows:

Table 1 psychological stress situation in employment of university students

Options	Sub-total	Ratios
Stress-free	108	16.22%
Less stressful	124	18.62%
Average pressure	284	42.64%
More stressful	150	22.52%

From Table 1, we know that 83.78% of the students have employment psychological pressure in different degrees, 16.22% of the students have no employment psychological pressure; 22.52% of the students have high employment psychological pressure, and 61.26% of the students have general and low pressure. In view of the current economic situation and industry demand, the changes in the psychological pressure on employment of college students were also investigated and statistically analyzed, as shown in the table below:

Table 2 Changes in Employment Psychological Pressure of Current College Students

Options	Sub-total	Ratios
Much more stressful	194	29.13%
Slight increase in stress	379	56.91%
Pressure reduction	10	1.54%
No changes	83	12.46%

From Table 2, data analysis shows that 86.04% of the students face the current employment situation in varying degrees of employment psychological pressure has increased, 29.13% of the students said that the pressure increased a lot.

Table 3 Psychological stress tolerance of college students

Options	Sub-total	Ratios
nice	130	41.67%
general	141	45.19%
not too well	35	11.22%
bad	6	1.92%

From the data in Table 3:51.05% of the students' ability to withstand psychological stress is not ideal, of which 5.56% of the students' ability to withstand psychological stress is not very good, and 2.25% of the students' ability to withstand psychological stress is very poor. It can be seen that the problem of psychological stress of college students should not be ignored, and it is necessary to strengthen the guidance and timely detoxification, in order to prevent irreparable consequences.

The research found that the symptoms of psychological stress in students' employment are generally manifested as anxiety, nervousness, low self-esteem, irritability, fear, insomnia, etc., of which nearly 70 per cent of students have symptoms of anxiety and nervousness; 28.83 per cent of students have low self-esteem and 25.83 per cent of students have symptoms of irritability. In view of the current situation of psychological pressure on college students' employment, most of the students can consciously self-adjustment from the perspective of the way to solve the employment pressure, but not a few of them choose to repress the silence, and relatively few students seek professional psychological counselling and consultation.

4. Analysis of the causes of psychological stress in university students' employment

By investigating and analysing the sources of psychological pressure on employment of 667 students in Qingdao Binhai University, the sources of psychological pressure on employment are as follows:

4.1. Personal reasons

(1) Stereotyped employment concepts, convergence of career choices, and serious involution. The traditional value of "all things are inferior, only the book is high" is deeply imprinted in the minds of university graduates, at the same time, some students do not have a comprehensive understanding of the economic situation, paranoid employment concepts, employment goals are narrow and overly high, the research data, 59.16% of the students want to be employed in the economically developed regions, 60.06% of students choose to go to higher education, relatively concentrated employment destination location and employment type, resulting in increased employment pressure.

(2) Lack of practical experience in internships. From the research data, 39.49 per cent of students will not take the initiative to participate in internships and practices, while the current economic situation, the enterprises demand fewer jobs, the requirements for applicants are relatively high, and graduates without any work experience often miss the opportunity.

(3) Lack of employment awareness, lack of career planning. From the research data, 55.26% of students do not have career development planning, not ready for employment, this part of the students faced with graduation employment, part of the students will feel at a loss, bewildered,

aimless, the other part of the students will appear to follow the trend of comparing the job search, the companion pile up to seek employment, etc., this kind of unpreparedness, the goal of the unclear attitude of job search is difficult to find a job successfully, but also greatly affects the quality of the student's job search, the student Repeatedly unsuccessful job search will increase the psychological pressure of employment^[3].

4.2. Family reasons

From the research data on whether parents' expectations will cause employment pressure on themselves, 77.48 per cent of the students said that pressure exists to varying degrees. Excessive parental expectations and the constraints imposed on children by their parents' concepts of employment can cause psychological pressure.

4.3. School reasons

(1) Inadequate psychological education for employment in colleges and universities. Psychological pressure increases in the process of college students' employment, and one of the important tasks that cannot be neglected in the process of employment in colleges and universities should be to pay attention to the psychological changes in the process of students' job search and strengthen the psychological education and guidance in a timely manner, but this point is often neglected. Employment psychology education includes psychological guidance, self-regulation, employment and entrepreneurship, etc. However, although colleges and universities have set up career education classes and employment guidance classes, they focus on conveying positive employment concepts, ignore the psychological changes in the process of students' job search, and neglect timely and effective intervention.

(2) School employment guidance work is unprofessional and incomplete. Employment guidance work in colleges and universities is mostly carried out by college counsellors and class teachers, and although recruitment, interviews, lectures and job recommendations are organised, the scientific use of information technology expertise has yet to be improved with the arrival of the 5G era^[4].

(3) Insufficient connection between the curriculum and market demand. Discipline system set up there is heavy theory, light practice phenomenon, during the school period, students in-depth enterprise unit internship practice opportunities are few, simple theoretical knowledge learning leads to the lack of professional skills, and market demand is out of line.

4.4. Social reasons

From the survey data, 86.34 per cent of the students believe that the economic downturn and the difficulty of employment have brought greater psychological pressure on students' employment. Under the current economic situation, the number of jobs has decreased, on the one hand, most of the enterprises prefer to have experienced employees and are not willing to invest in the cost of training fresh graduates; on the other hand, the group of university graduates shows a severe employment situation of oversupply, and the graduates who can't receive the offer for repeated job applications will be panicked, worried, anxious and other psychological factors, which will increase the psychological pressure of employment.

5. Countermeasures to alleviate psychological pressure on university students' employment

Qingdao Binhai University, in order to do a good job of psychological counselling of students' employment, provides countermeasures and methods to alleviate the psychological pressure of college students' employment in many ways, solves the psychological pressure of students' employment in an all-round way, lays the foundation for students' career development, broadens the path and realizes high-quality employment.

5.1. Online and offline employment counselling in a two-pronged manner to grasp employment opportunities in a comprehensive manner

In the brand-new era of "Internet +", all colleges of the university organize online and offline fairs, lectures and job fairs of different types and scales; encourage college students to grasp the opportunities of Internet + entrepreneurship, integrate all aspects of employment and entrepreneurship into the Internet factor, and ensure that the exports are new and excellent, many and wide; continuously strengthen the use of online information technology for graduates. In addition, all colleges are equipped with full-time teachers for online service guidance to promptly solve students' confusions and problems in online job application and search. Through specific guidance, our graduates in the process of employment, choose to start a business to open online shops, network anchor, network monitoring and offline logistics and distribution workers and other increasing numbers.

5.2. Expanding Employment Channels and Forming a System for Visiting Enterprises and Expanding Jobs

Our school in-depth implementation of the "Shandong Province" 100 schools and 10,000 enterprises "college secretary and headmaster to visit enterprises to expand jobs and promote employment special action implementation programme" spirit of the requirements of the leadership at all levels, professional teachers, counsellors and class teachers to participate in the whole team, digging employment resources, to broaden employment channels.

5.3. Effective communication between home and school to help employment and entrepreneurship

The conflict between parents' expectations and their children's employment wishes are inconsistent and often bring great psychological pressure to the children. At this time, if parents communicate with their children calmly and objectively, listen to their children's true inner thoughts, objectively give scientific guidance, analysis, suggestions, respect and support their children's planning, and give corresponding care and understanding, it can help graduates to effectively alleviate the pressure of employment. Our school counsellors, class teachers use parents WeChat group, telephone communication and other forms of close contact with parents, and from time to time to organize parent seminars, guiding parents to take into account their children's own development, change the narrow traditional concept of employment^[5], to help students employment and entrepreneurship.

5.4. Timely revision of professional training programmes and improvement of students' practical abilities in internships

College students should not only master the theoretical knowledge inside and outside the profession, but also master the method of integrating theoretical knowledge and practical skills, combining theory and practice, internalising theoretical knowledge through practice and improving comprehensive ability. On the one hand, according to the demand of enterprises for talents, our university constantly optimises the professional curriculum and adjusts the professional training programme in time. On the other hand, there are internship and training bases for different majors, such as hotels, hospitals, kindergartens, early childhood education centres, etc., which provide convenient opportunities for students of different majors. At the same time, each college has a number of school-enterprise co-operation units, which provide students with sufficient resources for internship practice and greatly improve students' professional ability and comprehensive quality.

5.5. Paying attention to psychological stress in employment and strengthening psychological education for employment

Our school has set up school-level and college-level psychological counselling working group, consisting of full-time and part-time psychological counselling teachers, college psychological counselling working group is a branch of the school psychological counselling work, the two are closely coordinated, seamless, school psychological counselling working group on a regular basis to the college psychological counselling team to carry out professional training and guidance. For graduates, the psychological counselling team to carry out special employment psychological counselling, for graduates in the employment process of psychological pressure, emotional fluctuations, psychological problems and other important concerns, psychological work group teachers to take online and offline forms of attention to the frustrated students, found that there are psychological problems in the employment of the students, timely intervention and guidance, to help the students to relieve the pressure, empowered to go forward.

5.6. Optimizing career planning and strengthening career guidance services

In the process of career planning education, students are first guided to correctly position themselves, and at the same time, career planning is carried out in stages. Our school also combines career education and psychological guidance for employment to achieve early planning, early action and early implementation. Career education is carried out at the stage of freshmen's admission and graduation in combination with the characteristics of their majors.

Guiding students from their own strengths and advantages, tailor-made personal career planning, not inwardly piled up, do not follow the trend of comparison, employment before choosing a job, lower job expectations, but also do not excessively lower their own expectations, an objective understanding of their own, fully prepared for employment ideas. At the same time, to carry out special employment guidance, organising interview simulation topics, guiding students to effectively introduce themselves, scientifically show their own strengths and weaknesses, to help students to improve their ability to apply for jobs; organising activities such as workplace etiquette and manners learning, to help learn to master job search skills and improve job search ability.

In order to guide graduates to fully do career planning and career exploration, focusing on social needs and new market patterns, our university organizes annual career experience activities with rich content, rich roles and a wide range, including emerging positions such as workers in cultural and creative industries, e-commerce live broadcasting, as well as traditional jobs such as teachers, doctors, finance, etc. The tripartite linkage of career experience activities among the school, the society and the enterprises can help help graduates to All-round cognition, experience positions, but also help to open up the whole process of college students employment channels. The warm-hearted service of "nurturing talents in colleges and universities and recruiting talents in enterprises" has helped college students make a smooth transition from colleges and universities to the society, and provided a good platform for the smooth employment of college graduates.

6. Conclusion

In recent years, the psychological pressure of employment of college graduates has greatly affected their enthusiasm for job-seeking, employment and entrepreneurship, and in the process of employment showed a variety of psychological problems. Therefore, college teachers should enhance awareness, active intervention to respond to the multi-measures to guide college students to alleviate the psychological pressure of employment, enhance the ability to self-regulation, change the concept of employment in keeping with the times, and timely

elimination of negative emotions in the process of employment, the correct self-positioning, and deepen self-knowledge. Measures to deepen self-knowledge, guide the majority of students to have a sunshine psychology, and constantly strong inner should be adopted; at the same time, society, schools, families united together to strengthen the linkage, effective synergy, to promote the smooth employment of college graduates, healthy development.

Acknowledgements

This paper is one of the achievements of the research of Qingdao Binhai University in 2022, "Investigation of Psychological Employment Pressure of College Students and Exploration of Coping Strategies" (Project No.: 2022ZY09).

References

- [1] Hao Linlin. Analysis and Countermeasures Research on Psychological Pressure of College Students' Employment under New Situation [J]. Public Relations World, 2022, (18) 47-48.
- [2] Song Yang, Xie Liping. Employment psychological pressure and relief measures of college students [J]. Science and Technology Perspectives, 2016, (26) 47-48.
- [3] Zhang Hongqi, Zhao Yuee. How College Students Respond to the Challenges of the New Crown Pneumonia Epidemic on Employment [J]. China University Students' Employment, 2020(9): 38-43.
- [4] Zhang Chuqiong. Research on Local Government Responsibility in College Students' Employment [D]. South China University of Technology, 2021.
- [5] Li Jingguo. Analysis of reasons and strategies for diversified employment choices of college students in the new era [J]. Heilongjiang Higher Education Research, 2019, 37(10): 139-142.

Cui Qingling (1983-), female, Shandong Linyi, Han nationality, master's degree, Qingdao Binhai University, associate professor, research in ideological and political education.

Zhang Shoushun (1981-), Male, Rizhao, Shandong, Han nationality, Master's degree, Qingdao Binhai University, Associate Professor, research in ideological and political education.

Luo Dongchao (1991-), Male, Qingdao, Shandong, Han nationality, Master's Degree, Qingdao Binhai University, Assistant, research in ideological and political education.