

Analysis and Countermeasures Research on Employment Issues of Vocational College Graduates

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Abstract: Employment of college students has become a hot issue of social concern since the 21st century. With the expansion of vocational colleges, the employment situation for vocational graduates is very severe, and there are many problems at the social, school, and student levels. To address these issues, society needs to create a good employment environment and improve the employment rate of vocational graduates. Vocational colleges should be market-oriented, deepen educational reform, and improve students' employment competitiveness. Vocational students should actively prepare themselves in all aspects and enhance their abilities to succeed in job selection. This article analyzes the employment problems of vocational graduates and proposes relevant countermeasures.

1. Introduction

As the higher education model shifts from "elite" education to "mass" education, vocational college graduates face a more severe employment environment than university graduates. This article takes the School of Artificial Intelligence at Guangdong Polytechnic College as an example to analyze the reasons why graduates have insufficient employment capabilities and proposes countermeasures to solve the employment issues of vocational college graduates.

2. Analysis of Current Employment Issues among Vocational College Graduates

2.1. Social Reasons

2.1.1. The Distorted Orientation Caused by the Evaluation Standard of "Employment Rate Only"

In the evaluation and assessment system for talent cultivation and employment in higher vocational colleges, the country has shifted its focus from employment orientation to employment rate orientation, with the evaluation criterion being "employment rate". The level of employment rate has become the main indicator for measuring the quality of talent cultivation, employment level and employment quality of higher vocational colleges^[1]. Under the guidance of this "only employment rate" evaluation criterion, universities have become scapegoats for "being employed". Throughout the entire process of university employment, the focus is on employment rate, and higher vocational colleges are more concerned with whether graduates have been employed rather than the employment quality, students' ideological dynamics, and skill specialties.

2.1.2. Discrimination in Employment against Higher Vocational College Students in Society

There is a low level of recognition for higher vocational students in society, and some employers have biases and discrimination against higher vocational graduates. They believe that graduates with higher vocational education have lower academic qualifications and diplomas than university graduates, and their abilities must not be as good. As a result, some "artificial barriers" have emerged, leading to a decrease in employment opportunities for higher vocational graduates.

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2.2. Factors on the Side of Higher Vocational Colleges

2.2.1. Lack of Professional and Effective Employment Guidance

The employment work of universities cannot fully adapt to the changes in social and economic development, market demand, and enterprise talent needs. The employment guidance work is not comprehensive enough. Employment guidance teachers in higher vocational colleges are mostly employment counselors, and the teacher team has not received professional and systematic training. They cannot grasp the employment situation and environment accurately, and the guidance is single in form, which cannot allow students to truly understand the employment prospects, professional knowledge, skills, and work environment of their majors^[2]. The guidance lacks professionalism and socialization. In addition, employment guidance is limited to graduating students. Most of the guidance focuses on explaining employment policies, analyzing employment situations, and ignores the development and guidance of students' innovative abilities. It also lacks career ability testing, career planning, experience introduction, practical training, and adopts collective teaching. It lacks professional and personalized guidance, and the employment guidance is relatively narrow. Due to various objective factors, the effect of employment guidance for college students is not significant.

2.2.2. The Internships, Practical Training, and School-Enterprise Cooperation are not Deep Enough

Insufficient depth in internship, training, and school-enterprise cooperation Schools and enterprises have formed a close partnership to achieve their respective rapid development. However, school-enterprise cooperation lacks policy support and institutional safeguards, and the interests of both parties are not guaranteed, only staying on the surface and unable to go deeper. Vocational colleges regard school-enterprise cooperation as simply sending students to intern in enterprises, and the positioning of cooperation with enterprises is only limited to the employment stage, with a single cooperation model. They have not realized that school-enterprise cooperation is a talent cultivation model that should run through the entire school operation process. Many enterprises only provide internships and internship sites for schools, without truly optimizing the combination of educational resources.

2.2.3. Disconnection between Professional Course Design and Job Demand

With the rapid development of the social economy and the changes in the job market, emerging industries continue to emerge, and the structure of market talent demand is also constantly changing^[3]. However, vocational colleges lack mechanisms for deep integration with enterprises and the market.

There is a certain degree of mismatch between the curriculum design, teaching methods, and teacher teams with actual needs, which leads to a significant gap between the professional quality and practical abilities of vocational students and market demand^[4]. Many graduates find that the professional courses they have learned do not match the actual work environment after graduation, and the knowledge they have learned is outdated, making it difficult for them to perform relevant job duties. This ultimately leads to a mismatch between the talents trained by schools and the market demand, resulting in a phenomenon of "difficult to find jobs in one's own field, and taking jobs outside of one's own field."

2.2.4. Employment Information Communication Channels are not Smooth

The popularity of the Internet has made it easier for graduates to obtain employment information, but in reality, there is still an asymmetric distribution of information between vocational graduates and employers. Currently, at a vocational and technical college in Guangzhou where the author is located, although the school has built an employment information platform for graduates, the job descriptions provided by recruiting companies are too simple or even exaggerated in terms of welfare benefits, working environment, and job responsibilities. At the same time, recruiting companies are unable to obtain information about graduates' personal qualities, interpersonal relationships, problem-solving abilities, and teamwork skills. The platform lacks precise and personalized services, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic prevention and control period, where online recruitment has become the main channel. Students are all applying for jobs online, and interviews are also conducted online. Therefore, it is very necessary to have smooth employment channels. Only by having smooth employment channels can we ensure high-quality employment for graduates^[5].

2.3. Student Self-Factors

2.3.1. Unclear Self-Positioning and Misguided Employment Concepts

Graduates from vocational colleges are mostly "post-2000s" with a relatively good family economic background, but they lack the spirit of hard work and perseverance since childhood and have poor resilience. Most graduates are quite confident and have high expectations for their employment, but they tend to over-idealize their self-assessment, which makes it difficult for them to make a correct evaluation and positioning of their actual abilities.

Influenced by traditional family and societal values, graduates from vocational colleges may have misguided employment concepts. They tend to believe that government institutions and public sector jobs are superior to private enterprises, emphasizing "stability", "security", and "promotion", and ignoring the diversity of career development and the realization of personal value. Additionally, graduates often hold irrational beliefs about the importance of passing exams or becoming a civil servant to gain social recognition and career success. They may shy away from high-risk and high-challenge positions due to lack of experience and confidence, which can be a bottleneck for personal career development. Entrepreneurship is also uncommon, partly due to a lack of entrepreneurial spirit and practical abilities, as well as risk aversion and a lack of social security.

2.3.2. There is Room for Improvement in the Overall Quality and Abilities of Vocational College Graduates

Vocational college students generally have poor foundations in learning, low enthusiasm and initiative, weak basic skills, and low levels of professional skills and scientific literacy. Additionally, due to facing greater social pressure and a more complex social environment than ordinary higher education students, vocational college students have greater psychological pressure and relatively

poorer physical and mental health. Furthermore, since the innovation education in vocational colleges lags behind, their innovation skills and awareness are lacking, which means that there is a need for further improvement in their comprehensive qualities.

2.3.3. Lack of Reasonable and Systematic Career Planning

The self-positioning of graduates is biased, they lack sufficient self-awareness and career awareness, lack information about the job market and career prospects, and do not have a clear long-term career plan. Most students are not good at scheduling their time and personal affairs, and they do not know how to make a study plan. Their lives lack clear understanding and directional planning, without a clear direction to strive for. They may not know what kind of job they want to do or are capable of doing when they are about to graduate, and may choose a career path that does not match their abilities, interests, and values.

3. Strategies to Solve Employment Problems for Graduates from Vocational Colleges

3.1. Social level

3.1.1. Changing the Evaluation Criteria of “Employment Rate Only” at the Social Level

In order to improve the quality of talent training in vocational colleges, it is necessary to revise and improve the evaluation criteria and assessment system, change the "employment-only" evaluation criteria, reduce the proportion of employment rate assessment, and incorporate employment quality assessment indicators. In addition, a comprehensive employment quality evaluation system should be established to encourage and support vocational colleges to carry out high-quality employment for graduates.

The national government should also take action to formulate a plan to enhance employment abilities, guide vocational colleges to focus on cultivating students' core professional competitiveness, improve graduates' employability, and establish a multi-dimensional and multi-perspective comprehensive evaluation system for the quality of talent training in vocational colleges. This can better achieve the employment goals of graduates while improving the education quality and social recognition of vocational colleges.

3.1.2. Eliminating Employment Discrimination and Promoting Employment Fairness

Graduates from vocational colleges have advantages such as rich practical experience, outstanding professional quality, and proficient vocational skills. The general public and employers should recognize and evaluate vocational college graduates objectively, discard any biased perspectives, and eliminate prejudice and discrimination against vocational education. Society should promote the equal importance of vocational education and undergraduate education, and appropriately enhance the social recognition of vocational college graduates based on the demands of different professions. Employers should also eliminate unfair recruitment conditions such as "educational background discrimination", "gender discrimination", "work experience discrimination", "household registration discrimination", and provide equal employment opportunities for job applicants with practical abilities and professional skills.

3.2. Institutional Level

3.2.1. Ways to Improve the Quality of Employment Guidance Services in Vocational Colleges

Firstly, establish an employment guidance system that is deeply connected to market demand. Vocational colleges should establish various employment guidance services such as career planning, employment assessment, and internships to meet the individual needs of students. Secondly, strengthen the construction of the employment guidance teacher team. Colleges should establish a sound mechanism for cultivating and evaluating career guidance teachers, conduct training for career guidance teachers, and enhance their professional competence and skills. Introduce professional practitioners from society to conduct practical teaching and provide students with more comprehensive and professional career guidance services. Thirdly, expand the content and form of employment guidance. In addition to policy interpretation and employment situation analysis, services such as career ability testing, career planning, and career experience introduction should be strengthened to stimulate students' innovation ability. At the same time, personalized and professional guidance methods should be adopted to guide students in choosing employment positions based on their own situations. Finally, establish a graduate employment quality tracking and evaluation mechanism to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of employment guidance work, adjust employment guidance strategies and service content in a timely manner, and improve the quality and effectiveness of employment guidance work.

3.2.2. Deepen School-Enterprise Cooperation and Establish a Dynamic Talent Training Mechanism

To deepen school-enterprise cooperation, the government should introduce policies to support and regulate the cooperation between universities and enterprises, and provide necessary institutional and financial guarantees^[6]. Vocational colleges should work with enterprises to develop cooperation plans and goals, and establish a sound cooperation mechanism. Adopting methods such as group-oriented education and order-based class training can improve the quality of talent training, focusing on full-scale and all-process talent training with enterprise participation. This can establish a dynamic mechanism that couples supply and demand, and cultivate students' core competitiveness in their professions.

3.2.3. Strengthen the Integration of Vocational Colleges and the Market

Vocational colleges should strengthen the deep integration with enterprises and the market. In terms of curriculum design, teaching methods, and practical training, vocational colleges should closely follow market demand. They should optimize teacher training, encourage teachers to cooperate with enterprises, participate in practical projects, and gain a better understanding of market demand and technological changes. Moreover, vocational colleges should enhance practical training for students, provide practical courses related to market demand, allow students to gain experience and skills in practice, and enhance their ability to respond to market changes. Additionally, schools should establish a talent training model that integrates production, study, and research, cooperate with enterprises, provide professional training bases, and increase students' practical opportunities. By adopting these measures, vocational colleges can improve the employment competitiveness of graduates and achieve a positive interaction between talent training and market demand.

3.2.3. Increase Policy Publicity and Strengthen Employment Information Services

Vocational colleges should increase the publicity of employment policies and carry out regular

employment policy promotion activities to enable graduates to timely understand the employment policies issued by the national and local governments. Effectively improving the utilization of good policies is an important measure to promote the employment of vocational graduates. Schools should play their due service functions, actively use various platforms and channels, and innovate promotion methods, such as using a series of new media such as the Internet, WeChat, Douyin, animation, etc. to promote and comprehensively interpret various preferential policies that promote employment and entrepreneurship for graduates. The relevant employment policies should be promoted to the majority of graduates.

3.3. Individual Level of Students

3.3.1. Objective Self-Positioning and Innovation of Employment Concepts

Vocational colleges should strengthen vocational education and career planning guidance, recognize the severe employment situation, abandon cognitive weaknesses such as aiming too high and having unrealistic expectations, and establish a "employment first, job selection later" employment concept; vocational colleges should promote entrepreneurship education and innovative thinking, encourage and guide graduates to start their own businesses actively; vocational colleges should break traditional concepts, enhance the diversity of employment concepts, help graduates understand the advantages, disadvantages, and development prospects of different career fields; vocational colleges should establish a scientific evaluation system, enable graduates to have a clear understanding and positioning of their actual abilities, and achieve a match between their own abilities and the needs of job positions^[7].

3.3.2. Enhancing Comprehensive Qualities to Increase Employability Competitiveness

Vocational college students need to not only strengthen their professional and practical skills, but also possess abilities such as ideological and political qualities, humanistic qualities, psychological qualities, and innovative spirit. At the same time, they should be familiar with job search skills such as resume writing and interview techniques, and master etiquette such as appearance, demeanor, and speech.

3.3.3. Developing a Scientific and Reasonable Career Plan

At the beginning of enrollment, students should be guided to plan their own career paths based on their personal situations and market demands, clarify their self-positioning, establish career goals, develop suitable learning plans, strengthen their moral cultivation and team spirit, improve their sense of social responsibility and psychological resilience, to ensure the successful completion of vocational college studies.

The cultivation of vocational college students' technical and employability skills is crucial to the political, economic, social, and cultural development of our country. Therefore, the whole society needs to work together to establish a systematic training model. As a key force in this model, vocational colleges should accelerate the reform process, transform outdated educational concepts, and prepare for the cultivation of students with high employability skills.

4. Conclusions

After the expansion of vocational colleges, the number of students has rapidly increased, leading to a continuous increase in the number of vocational graduates each year and increasing employment pressure. How to solve the employment problem of vocational graduates has an important impact on

the overall development trend of vocational colleges and the employment of graduates in the labor market. If this problem cannot be solved well, it may cause dissatisfaction among vocational students and even affect social stability. However, the employment problem of vocational graduates is a comprehensive issue that covers many factors such as education, economy, and society. It is a relatively large system, and only through the concerted efforts of all parties can the employment problem be alleviated.

Although this study has been completed, due to the influence of factors such as educational level, academic ability, time, and region, the viewpoints expressed may have certain limitations. There are also some shortcomings in the research results and the research process is not deep enough. However, this is just the beginning, and more in-depth exploration will be carried out in the future. We also hope that more scholars can provide effective suggestions.

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