

The Impact Of COVID-19 On Employment Choices and Industry Trends Among Chinese College Graduates

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Abstract. This study examines the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Chinese university graduates' employment and professional choices. In recent years, the number of Chinese university graduates has been increasing, with great competitive pressure, unclear employment directions, "difficult employment" after graduation, and dissatisfaction with employment after entering the company. However, COVID-19 has made the problems of "difficult employment" and "low employment satisfaction" among college students even more serious this year. A survey of the 2021 undergraduate graduates of the School of Oceanography at Tianjin N University shows that only 12% of the graduates are ready to look for jobs directly, and the enthusiasm of new graduates for research civil servants and institutions is still heating up. In the new era, pursuing graduate studies, civil service and career exams remain the most popular options for university graduates. The epidemic also affected graduates' professional matching, but the class of 2021 is more focused on matching between jobs and professions. Overall, the epidemic significantly impacted college graduates' jobs and major choices.

Keywords: Employment choices; College graduates; Industry trends; COVID-19.

1. Introduction

Employment has always been a hot topic for Chinese college students [1]. In recent years, the number of college students graduating has increased, the pressure of competition is great, the direction of employment is unclear, they are faced with "difficult employment" after graduation, and they are dissatisfied with the employment situation after entering the company [2]. However, the COVID-19 epidemic has severely affected the "difficult employment" and "low employment satisfaction" of college students this year. How to improve the level of employment satisfaction of college students is of great significance to China's social stability and sustainable economic development [3]. The COVID-19 epidemic has greatly impacted the employment of college students in China. In this context, this paper explores the correlation between the employment positions of Chinese college graduates and their majors before and after the pandemic.

The pandemic has had a big impact on various industries, but in the impact, there are opportunities. Workforce-intensive companies reduce wages or lay off workers to keep operations low. Labor-intensive manufacturing industries are all affected by labor shortages, tight supply and rework delays [4].

An Analysis of the Employment choices of 2021 undergraduate graduates from the College of Oceanography of Tianjin N University (post-epidemic period) [5]. Based on a survey of 187 undergraduate graduates in 2021, the results show that only 12% are prepared to look for a job directly. It can be seen that the research enthusiasm of fresh college graduates and the heat of civil service institutions continue to heat up, and the number of people is the highest. In the new era, the entrance examination for postgraduate studies, civil servants and public institutions is still the most popular choice for college graduates. At the same time, the phenomenon of slow employment and slow employment of graduates is more obvious.

G Distribution of employment industry of university graduates. 2020 is the period of high incidence of the epidemic, and the requirements of graduates for professional matching are

significantly lower than that of 2021 after the epidemic. The graduates of the 21st class pay more attention to matching jobs and majors [6].

The outbreak of the epidemic has had a certain impact on the factors of employment choice. In addition, it also has a great impact on the employment view of college students. The primary factor graduates consider when choosing a job is long-term development, focusing on job stability. After the outbreak of the new coronavirus, the downward pressure on the economy has increased, some enterprises have closed down, and the number of jobs has decreased, which makes college graduates pay more attention to the long-term development of work, hoping to get a stable job [7].

2. Pandemic's Impact on Employment and Industries

The COVID-19 pandemic did bring some negative effects on the development of the social economy in 2020. The effects showed clearly in employment. And many fresh graduates had to face the adverse factors about employment. Unemployment after graduating is the biggest problem in China for graduates.

According to the 2019 Chinese College Student Employment Report released by the employment department in China, the employment rate of graduates in 2018 was 91.5%, which means that before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, there already have been more than 700,000 Chinese graduates unemployed, and this situation becomes more and more severe [4]. Although the rate looks not so low, due to the large population in China, the problem will be harder and harder to solve. Furthermore, with the number of graduates increasing constantly, the pressure of competition will be huge shortly, and the overloaded positions are bound to eliminate some people.

To go through the tough period, many human-intensive companies chose to reduce wages or lay off employees to keep a low operation. Therefore, this kind of industry could not offer more job opportunities for society in a short time. Catering, tourism, hotel, and cinema industries were in trouble during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some big companies said the finance could only support them for three months. In addition, because of a significant reduction in passenger flow and a sharp decline in company income, road transport, rail transport, air transport and ship transport were almost all halted [7]. Besides the suppliers of raw materials for masks and protective equipment, many labor-intensive manufacturing industries, such as electronics, clothing, and building materials, needed help to overcome the influence of labor shortages, supply constraints and delays in rework. Fresh graduates who majored in these industries during the university should truly consider how to make a living during the pandemic. Some chose to continue further study, and others altered the positions they may not have considered before to earn money.

The 2020 epidemic has also made online education, cloud office, games, short video, logistics and other industries seize the opportunity to go upstream and usher in an explosive outlet. After the resumption of work, many enterprises organized employees to use Dingding to work, and the number of users was high, with 200 million people, which made Dingding's server full. In addition, online education apps such as Wisdom Tree, Cloud Video, Super Star Learning Pass, Xueersi Online School, and Chinese college students MOOC have been widely used in the short term, with an average of more than 2 million real-time users per hour. Short videos and mobile games were in the same situation. King of Glory had active users of 120 to 150 million on an average day, which takes up about 10% of the population in China, and the daily flow peak was as high as 2 billion yuan. Ali Health, Jingdong Home, Ding Dong shopping and other medical, fresh shopping apps were also unprecedentedly hot, as one of the most important logistics distribution fields was growing madly [4]. It can be seen from the data that the epidemic has caused a great impact on various industries, but there are also opportunities for the impact. The demand for jobs in industries closely related to people's lives, the industry that provides online services, and the education and training industry have been less affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, and the great value contained in modern intelligent systems has been highlighted.

3. Graduates' Post-Pandemic Employment Choices and Industry Trends

3.1. The Employment Choices of 2021 Undergraduate Graduates

Through the questionnaire survey of 187 undergraduate graduates in 2021, the survey results show that the employment destination of undergraduate graduates is the largest proportion of graduate students, accounting for 66%. The number of civil servants and public institutions who intend to prepare for the exam is second, accounting for 18%. Only 12 percent were prepared to seek employment directly [6]. From this, it can be seen that the research fever and civil servant and public institution fever of new college wood graduates continue to heat up, and the number is mostly.

At the end of the senior year, the survey on the employment destination of graduates of the class of 2021 shows the following results. According to the survey results, most graduates have been admitted to graduate school, accounting for 29%. The number of job seekers in enterprises accounted for 19%. The number of people engaged in civil servants and public institutions is small, accounting for only 2%, and the number of entrepreneurs only accounts for 1% [6]. The analysis shows that more people are applying for graduate students, civil servants and public institutions, but the competition is fierce.

For the graduates who have not implemented the employment direction, the number of graduates who continue to prepare for the postgraduate examination is still large, accounting for 15%. Still, 5% of graduates plan to continue preparing for civil service institutions. The largest number of people were self-employed or not ready for employment, accounting for 24 percent [6]. In the new era, the entrance examination of graduate school, civil servants and public institutions is still the most popular choice for college graduates. At the same time, the phenomenon of slow employment and slow employment of graduates is more obvious.

The analysis shows significant differences between graduates' employment intention and their employment destination. The number of people who initially intended to study for graduate school accounted for 66%, and the number of successfully admitted students accounted for only 29%. 22% of graduates who intended to study for graduate school did not continue to prepare for graduate school because of their failure, but 15% of students still chose to continue to prepare for graduate school. The number of students who initially intended to study abroad accounted for 4%, and those who were successfully admitted accounted for 5%. The number of graduates who initially intended to study for civil servants and institutions accounted for 18%, and those who were successfully admitted accounted for only 2%. 11% of graduates who intended to study for civil servants and institutions did not continue to study for civil servants and institutions because of failure in the examination. However, 5% of students continued studying for civil servants and institutions. The number of people initially intended to find employment in enterprises accounted for 12%. The number of successful people accounted for 19% because some of the students who failed to take the postgraduate examination, civil servants and public institutions chose to find employment in enterprises. However, there are still 24% of the students in the state of waiting for employment [6].

3.2. Employment Industry Distribution of Undergraduate Graduates

As a provincial normal university, the industrial layout of graduates of G University is in line with the professional setting and training orientation of G University, which mainly flows to education, other service industries and software and information technology service industries. Among them, the employment of undergraduates in three industries accounted for 60.20%, 7.22% and 2.59%, respectively. Compared with graduates in 2018 (31.68% in education, 7.20% in other services, and 4.03% in software and information technology services), the proportion of the education industry increased significantly, while other services were flat. Software and information technology services declined [8].

The professional counterpart before the outbreak (12.50%) was stronger than after the outbreak (9.14%). This means COVID-19 makes it less important in the professional counterpart, and some graduates have to choose positions they could do better.

In 2020, when the epidemic is prevalent, the requirements of graduates for professional matching are significantly lower than in 2021, which is the post-pandemic period. The graduates of the class of 21 pay more attention to matching job positions and majors. According to the chart, it increased from 4.05% in 2020 to 12.73% in 2021, which raised by over 8% [8].

The epidemic outbreak has a certain impact on the factors of job selection, and it also greatly impacts the employment view of college students. The primary factor that graduates consider when choosing a job is long-term development and attention to the stability of the job [9].

After the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, the downward pressure on the economy has increased, some enterprises have closed down, and the number of jobs has decreased, which makes college graduates pay more attention to the long-term development of work and hope to get a stable job [10].

4. Conclusion

Through the survey of two different universities, it can be found that the epidemic greatly impacts graduates' employment. Most students are affected by the negative influence and choose to go to graduate school, and few graduates find satisfying jobs. Many industries have stagnated or closed down in this environment because of the pandemic's impact. Graduates have to choose employment; the requirements for employment are low, and their professional learning in the university period needs to be more relevant. Due to the pandemic, graduates have lower requirements for professional compatibility. Therefore, it can be concluded that the epidemic greatly impacts graduate students' employment position and professional parity and is positively correlated. At the same time, we have to come up with solutions. Schools should pay attention to the psychological counseling of college students and carry out relevant psychological tests on them regularly. Schools should be equipped with experienced psychological teachers, encourage students and teachers to communicate, and ease graduates' employment pressure. The country should urge schools to provide relevant career guidance to college students, especially those without practical experience amid the pandemic. Employment guidance can alleviate the anxiety of the epidemic, enhance college students' confidence in employment, and reduce the sense of crisis. The state can also vigorously support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, correctly grasp, and actively study and adopt more targeted policy measures to help small and micro enterprises boost confidence, steady operation, improve profitability and development momentum, and enhance the sustainable development capacity of enterprises. Only by allowing more small and micro enterprises to survive and develop well can we better stimulate market vitality and social creativity. We will improve the employment and entrepreneurship service system for college students and promote their employment. The entrepreneurial process of college students brings many opportunities and challenges, and college students' entrepreneurship will also move to a new height in these opportunities and challenges. Colleges and universities can also set up entrepreneurship courses or establish entrepreneurship associations and training camps so interested students can participate as soon as possible so that most students clearly understand the future.

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