

An Empirical Study on the Current Situation of University Students' Employment Rolls Towards the System in the Post-epidemic Era and the Paths to Alleviate Them

Yuling Wang, Xinhui Huang, Fangliang Zhu

College of Marxism, Hunan University of Arts and Sciences, Changde, Hunan, 415000, China

Abstract

Jobs in the Chinese system have always been favored by college student groups in universities, especially under the influence of the epidemic, college students have been more prominent in their rolls to the system. This paper uses SPSS25.0 data analysis software to analyse the characteristics and causes of university students' employment roll towards the system based on the 2018-2020 Hunan Province Employment Quality Report and data from questionnaires from students in three universities in Hunan Province. In order to guide university students to treat jobs within the system in a reasonable and rational manner, this research group discusses the corresponding relief paths. The characteristics of university students' tendency to work in the system are as follows: the "double cycle" has not yet been established, and university students prefer to work in institutions; university students are weak in resisting risks, and their employment is concentrated in institutions; university students have a single choice of employment, and enter institutions regardless of the cost; traditional employment views drive university students to choose institutions. The reasons for this include the high employment pressure of university students, the increasing "high school entrance examination" competition, the weakness of private enterprises in general and their limited employment capacity, the lack of employment awareness of university students in terms of multi-directional competition, the lagging social employment concept and the lack of inclusiveness in social value evaluation. The path to relief is to promote the "double cycle" stereotype, unblock the domestic and international employment market, the state should vigorously support private enterprises and improve the employment exit mechanism, university students should focus on their own construction and establish a diversified employment concept, and social value evaluation should be diversified and inclusive to encourage university students' diversified employment.

Keywords

Employment of college students; Roll to the system; Relief path; Empirical study.

1. Introduction

In recent years the number of Chinese university graduates has shown a rising trend, with the number of graduates from China's universities from 2020 to 2021 reaching record highs. Particularly under the impact of the epidemic, the employment of university students in China is characterised by a continuous roll-up towards the system. Under this circumstance, if university students blindly pursue jobs within the system, it will definitely cause a "traffic jam", which is very unfavourable to society and university students themselves. This paper analyses the characteristics and causes of the phenomenon of university students moving into the system on the basis of data analysis, and gives a path to alleviate it, with the aim of providing a reference for university students and people from all walks of life, so that university students can choose their jobs in a rational and rational way.

2. Characteristics of University Students' Employment to Institutional Rolls

The research team set up a questionnaire on the employment of university students and randomly selected 320 students from 16 second-level colleges of Hunan College of Arts and Sciences, Hunan Institute of Applied Technology and Hunan Higher Institute of Early Childhood Education to conduct a questionnaire survey on them using a whole sampling method, 320 questionnaires were distributed and 314 valid questions were returned, achieving a 98% questionnaire return rate and a 100% effective rate. The research team also referred to the data in the Employment Quality Report of Hunan Province for 2018-2020. This study used SPSS25.0 statistical analysis software as a tool to analyse the reliability of the questionnaire using the Cronbach coefficient, combined with the composite mean to analyse the data in the questionnaire and the report. From the statistics and analysis of the data, the results of their analysis are as follows.

2.1. The "Double Cycle" Has Not Yet Set In, College Students Prefer Career Employment

In today's increasingly significant changes in the domestic and international environment, the Party Central Committee has taken stock of the situation and proposed "building a new development pattern" and General Secretary Xi Jinping has also stressed that "we should accelerate the building of a new development pattern with a major domestic cycle and a dual domestic and international cycle to promote each other". [1] "The 'double cycle' is now a core part of China's economic development, a solution for China to optimize its economic pattern and join hands with the world to achieve a win-win situation, and its concept has reached a mature stage and its strategic objectives have been clearly defined." [2] However, the situation has not yet been defined, the strategy is still in the development stage, and the choice of employment for university students in China, with limited resources and markets, shows a "preference for the career sector".

The data in Tables 1 and 2 below were obtained by the research team using SPSS25.0 data analysis software to analyse the data in the section of "Distribution of employment units of college graduates" in the Employment Quality Report of Hunan Province from 2018 to 2020. The data were analysed using year as the variable, and undergraduate graduates, senior college graduates and graduate students as three different categories for independent t-tests.

As shown in Table 1, there is a significant difference between 2018 and 2019 graduates in choosing "career" and "private enterprise", with p-values less than 0.05. The proportion of graduates choosing career has shown a decrease between 2018 and 2019, while the proportion of graduates choosing private enterprise has shown an increase. The proportion of graduates who chose "career" and "private enterprise" showed a decrease, while the proportion of graduates who chose private enterprise showed an increase. The other four types of occupations did not show significant differences, and their proportion of graduates also fluctuated within normal levels.

As shown in Table 2, there is a significant difference between the 2019 and 2020 graduate cohorts in terms of the choice of "career units", "private enterprises", "three funded enterprises" and "other enterprises". The proportion of graduates choosing "career unit", "private enterprise", "sampo-funded enterprise" and "other enterprise" showed significant differences between 2019 and 2020, with p-values less than 0.05. The proportion of graduates choosing career unit showed an increase, the proportion of graduates choosing private enterprise showed a decrease, the proportion of graduates choosing sampo-funded enterprise showed a decrease, and the proportion of graduates choosing other The proportion of graduates choosing other types of employment is on the rise. The proportion of graduates who

chose state-owned enterprises and party and government organs did not show any significant difference, and the proportion of graduates fluctuated within normal levels.

"The data on the distribution of the nature of employment units for college graduates in Hunan Province from 2018 to 2020 in the Employment Quality Report shows that the main units chosen by graduates in 2018 were state-owned enterprises and institutions, the main units chosen by graduates in 2019 were private enterprises, state-owned enterprises and institutions, and the main units chosen by graduates in 2020 were institutions, state-owned enterprises, the Party and government organs and private enterprises". [3] Combined with the above data and the data in Table 1 and Table 2, it shows that college graduates in Hunan Province prefer institutions when choosing their employment units.

Table 1. Analysis of the difference in the distribution of the nature of employment units for college graduates in Hunan Province in 2018 and 2019

	2018	2019	t	p
	M±SD	M±SD		
Business units	0.49±0.1	0.21±0.1	3.237	0.032
State-owned enterprises	0.28±0.1	0.15±0.08	1.87	0.135
Party and government institutions	0.08±0.03	0.04±0.01	2.016	0.172
Private enterprises	0.08±0.03	0.53±0.19	-4.219	0.048
Triple-funded enterprises	0.06±0.03	0.04±0.01	0.871	0.466
Other	0.01±0.01	0.01±0.01	0.039	0.971

Table 2. Analysis of the difference in the distribution of the nature of employment units for college graduates in Hunan Province in 2019 and 2020

	2019	2020	t	p
	M±SD	M±SD		
Business units	0.21±0.1	0.47±0.1	-3.117	0.036
State-owned enterprises	0.15±0.08	0.25±0.13	-1.140	0.318
Party and government institutions	0.04±0.01	0.16±0.09	-2.261	0.151
Private enterprises	0.53±0.19	0.07±0.04	4.316	0.042
Triple-funded enterprises	0.04±0.01	0.02±0.01	4.878	0.008
Other	0.01±0.01	0.03±0.01	-3.721	0.02

Note: Significant difference at $P < 0.05$ level, highly significant difference at $P < 0.01$ level

2.2. College Students Are Less Risk Averse and Employment Is Clustered in Institutions

"College students can face difficulties in employment such as knowledge limitations, lack of experience, mentality problems, weak innovation and difficulties with employment funds." [4] The risks that university students face when they are employed are already certain, and with the impact of the epidemic and the increased uncertainty of employment information, the employment risks are increased. In this case, students need to be more risk averse in order to resist the impact of various uncertainties, and in terms of employment, students are showing the phenomenon of gathering in institutions.

The data in Tables 3 and 4 below were obtained by the research team using SPSS25.0 data analysis software to analyse the data in the section of "College graduates not employed and

ready to enter career units" in the Employment Quality Report of Hunan Province from 2018 to 2020. The data were analysed using year as the variable, and undergraduate graduates, higher vocational graduates and graduate students as three different categories for independent t-tests.

As shown in Table 3 and Table 4, there is no significant difference between the groups of college graduates in terms of their readiness to enter career units, with p-values greater than 0.05. However, from the data in the employment quality report of Hunan Province, the proportion of "readiness to enter career units" in the distribution of the types of non-employment is increasing year by year, with the proportion in 2018 being 9.47%, in 2019, 14.12% and in 2020, 27.09%. This data shows that graduates from colleges and universities are increasingly choosing to work in institutions.

Table 3. Analysis of the differences between 2018 and 2019 in the preparation of unemployed graduates from Hunan universities to enter the career sector

	2018	2019	t	p
	M±SD	M±SD		
Preparing to enter a career	0.18±0.1	0.1±0.04	-1.477	0.214

Table 4. Analysis of the difference between 2019 and 2020 Hunan university graduates who are not employed and are ready to enter the career sector

	2019	2020	t	p
	M±SD	M±SD		
Preparing to enter a career	0.1±0.04	0.3±0.15	-2.3	0.135

Note: Significant difference at P<0.05 level, highly significant difference at P<0.01 level

2.3. University Students Have A Single Choice of Employment and Enter the Career Sector Regardless of the Cost

From the data released in the Employment Quality Report of Hunan Province combined with the data in the questionnaire of this research group, it can be seen that the employment choice of university students is relatively single, and some of them also show a single phenomenon in terms of career selection channels. The current situation shows that "entering an institution" is a popular choice among university students, and as long as they meet the application requirements, they can apply for it. Some students even have the idea of "not getting into the civil service", and if they don't get in, they keep referring to it year after year.

In Hunan province, for example, from the data published on the official website of Changsha Zhongguo Education, as shown in the chart below, the number of civil servants recruited in Hunan province has been at a relatively stable figure, but its number of applicants has been increasing year by year, especially in 2020, when the number of applicants exceeded 140,000, reaching a new high in recent years. Competition for many positions is also particularly fierce. "Changsha City Agricultural and Rural Bureau is the hottest position in the Hunan civil service, with its competition ratio reaching 1,724:1" [5] Many other positions are not as competitive as this one, but competition also reaches a ratio of 100 to 1.

Table 5. Statistics on the number of recruits and enrolments in the Hunan civil service over the years [5]

	Number of recruits	Number of applicants
2016	7080	106893
2017	9671	105619
2018	9817	114392
2019	6522	98164
2020	7110	142881
2021	5621	121725
2022	8362	Unknown

2.4. The Traditional View of Employment Drives University Students to Choose Career Units for Employment

Chinese university students are often influenced by the traditional view of employment when choosing an employment unit. "Every year, a considerable number of students in China choose to enter state-owned units through various ways and means in order to pursue stability, and the concept of 'iron rice bowl' in the traditional view of employment is also deeply rooted in the university students' group. Civil servants, lawyers, teachers and other professions have become the first choice of university students" [6] In the survey of this research group, it is also found that traditional employment will be given priority by university students when they make employment choices.

The data in Figure 6 below is the result of our research team's analysis of the data in the "Types of post-graduation career choices" section of the Hunan Employment Quality Report from 2018 to 2020 using SPSS25.0 data analysis software. As the data in the table shows, the choices of further education, self-employment and temporary non-employment fluctuate only slightly between 2018 and 2020, almost in a stable state, but traditional employment and flexible employment show greater fluctuations, with the proportion of traditional employment increasing sharply between 2019 and 2020, while the proportion of flexible employment shows a sharp decline. The majority of post-graduates choose traditional careers, with many of them opting to enter the system.

Table 6. Proportional distribution of types of post-graduation career choices of university students in Hunan, 2018-2020

Type Year	Frequency			Percentage		
	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
Traditional employment	26651	44143	166926	16.21	11.49	41.95
Flexible employment	93498	246624	102725	56.86	64.17	25.81
Further study	19374	28315	43825	11.78	7.37	11.01
Self-employment	691	1273	1785	0.42	0.33	0.45
Temporary non-employment	20738	52617	71884	12.61	13.69	18.06

3. Causes of the Employment of University Students to the System Roll

3.1. University Students Are Under Great Pressure to Find Employment and Competition Is Becoming Increasingly "Gaolized"

With a large population and a large population base, employment in China is an issue of general concern to society. In recent years, the number of college graduates in China has been increasing year by year, and college students are facing a severe employment situation, coupled with the impact of the epidemic, the employment of graduates is encountering unprecedented challenges. On the one hand, the competition among groups of university students, with relatively limited job options available, has invariably intensified; on the other hand, groups of university students have to face competition with other social groups in job positions.

In this context, influenced by various factors, "university students are somewhat torn between 'ideal value pursuit' and 'realistic survival needs', but overall there is a preference for 'reality over ideal' preference and a 'stability' trend in targeting goals." [7] Some university students have made corresponding changes in their choice of employment jobs, and the tendency of employment has developed from a preference for the open and active type to a conservative and steady type, i.e. pursuing positions within the system. Driven by the severe employment environment and the subjective career choice consciousness of college students, college students turn their attention to the system in order to find a stable job and obtain a stable income, which also leads to college students pushing to compete for positions within the system, and this competition is becoming "gaolized".

3.2. Private Companies Are Generally Weak and Have A Low Job Match

Over the past 40 years of reform and opening up, China's private economy has developed rapidly. According to statistics, by the end of 2020, the number of private enterprises in China had reached more than 40 million, contributing to more than 80% of urban employment. Some of the larger and stronger private enterprises under the impact of the epidemic have started to make large-scale layoffs in response to the negative impact of the epidemic, with private enterprises such as Tencent, Ali and Jingdong as examples. In addition, some of China's private enterprises are relatively difficult to finance due to their small size and the predominance of small and micro enterprises, and the high cost of financing, which has also affected the development and growth of private enterprises. The combined effect of these factors has led to the current weakness of Chinese private enterprises in general.

In this context, private enterprises are also able to provide relatively limited positions, and some positions are not currently tending to saturation, some companies can not recruit suitable personnel for certain positions. This contradicts the situation that it is more difficult for university students to find a job. In addition, the employment of university students faces a common problem: the relevance of employment positions to the majors studied in school is not high, and the employment match is low. Especially under the impact of the epidemic, the employment concept of college graduates has also changed, and more and more college graduates tend to look for jobs within the system due to the poor stability of jobs outside the system.

3.3. Lack of Awareness Among University Students of the Need to Compete for Jobs with Multiple Options

The social employment environment has a certain influence on the employment of college students, however, there are also some problems in the employment choices of college students themselves. "After entering university, students should gradually form a career plan under the guidance of parents and teachers, taking into account their own strengths, interests, personalities and other intrinsic conditions, and accumulate various knowledge and skills in a

selective manner." [8] However, the reality is that most university students do not clearly feel the pressure of employment when they are studying at school. As most university students fail to have a clearer understanding of the employment environment, it leads to a comparative lack of awareness of multi-directional competition in employment. Their studies at school tend to be focused on the scope of their individual studies and they do not realise the importance of broadening their field of study and developing relevant skills. In particular, the impact of the epidemic and the massive layoffs in some companies have made graduates realise the advantages of the "iron rice bowl". As a result, students from different majors are inclined to choose jobs within the system. Jobs within the system, such as public examinations and editorial examinations, are sought after by some groups of university students. The work within the system is certainly stable and the treatment is better, but the positions within the system are after all limited, and when some college students have joined the competition for public examinations and examinations, it has invariably intensified the internal volume.

3.4. Lagging Social Perceptions of Employment and Lack of Inclusiveness in the Evaluation of Social Values

Social attitudes have played a role in helping students to roll up to the system for employment. Society is constantly moving forward, but sometimes the change in social attitudes does not keep pace with the development of society and has a lagging nature. The lagging social concept of employment is manifested as follows. Despite the state and government promoting occupational equality, there is still occupational discrimination in the society, which affects the employment concept of people in the society. The employment concept has a certain influence on the employment of college students, "in the direction of employment, there is a significant correlation between the indicators of employment concept and the direction of employment, graduates who think that the social status of occupation and development opportunities are important are more willing to work in government agencies and state-owned enterprises respectively". When choosing employment, [9] tend to prefer those with high social recognition and good treatment, such as entering state-owned enterprises; or choose to take public examinations, examinations and other such stable careers. Secondly, with the development of society, professions that used to be considered "low grade" in society have become "hot", but due to the influence of the social concept of employment, such professions are still not a priority when choosing a job.

Generally speaking, society still lacks a certain degree of inclusiveness in judging the value of employment, which seriously limits the variety of possibilities for people to choose a career. In the case of university students, for example, they tend to choose careers that offer good pay, high status and stability, while those with low social recognition and poor pay are often not within the scope of university students' career choices. This has greatly limited the career choices of university students.

4. The Revelation and Relief Path of University Students' Employment to the System

4.1. Promoting "Double-circle" Stereotypes and Unblocking Domestic and International Job Markets

The outbreak of the New Crown epidemic has had a serious impact on trade between countries and has put enormous pressure on their economic development. In the face of this unstable and uncertain situation, the "Proposal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Formulating the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Visionary Goals for 2030", adopted at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Party Congress, proposed to accelerate the construction of a new development pattern with a major domestic

cycle and a dual domestic and international cycle to promote each other. In how to fully implement the decision to accelerate the construction of the new development pattern, Liu He, the relevant head of the State Council, proposed that "we should adhere to the employment orientation of economic development, expand employment capacity, improve the quality of employment and promote fuller employment." [10] Promoting employment is one of the requirements to promote the "double cycle" stereotype, and is also an important initiative to solve the employment of college students to the system roll.

The expansion of full employment and the promotion of a "double cycle" of stereotypes require national initiatives to unlock domestic and international job markets. Under the impact of the new epidemic, university students both at home and abroad are facing enormous employment pressure. Compared to the domestic market, some foreign countries have a better job market, more flexible and diverse employment options, and more favourable treatment. The state can take relevant incentives to encourage more state-owned enterprises and private enterprises to go abroad, invest in factories and export technology and services, so as to expand the employment channels of domestic people, increase job opportunities and ease the employment pressure at home.

4.2. The State Should Vigorously Support Private Enterprises and Improve the Employment Exit Mechanism

At this stage, private enterprises are mostly small, medium and micro enterprises, which are weak and can provide limited jobs, and the number of jobs matching the majors of college graduates is even smaller. Faced with the impact of the epidemic, the survival environment of some private enterprises has become more and more severe. The healthy development of private enterprises can promote effective employment and is the key to solving the current problem of university students' employment being rolled into the system. Research shows that "industrial policy can promote technological innovation of enterprises in key encouraged industries, especially private enterprises, through four mechanisms: credit, taxation, government subsidies and market competition." [11] For private enterprises to innovate and develop, they cannot do without policy support at the national level. To this end, the state should further increase the support for private enterprises, the development of relevant tax incentives, the development and improvement of relevant laws and regulations, to create a good business environment for private enterprises.

The healthy development of private enterprises plays a vital role in solving the current problem of college students' employment rolling towards the system. At present, private enterprises under the influence of the epidemic are facing an unstable business environment, providing limited and unstable jobs, which is also one of the important reasons why college graduates tend to be employed within the system. The healthy development of private enterprises can expand their scale, provide more jobs for social development, and even create new jobs, match the majors of college graduates, more fully meet the diversity of employment needs, help change the concept of college students piling into the system employment, and further can improve the employment exit mechanism, so that college students employment becomes less difficult. It is also conducive to changing the perception of university students piling into the system, and furthermore, it can improve the employment exit mechanism, making it less difficult for university students to find employment, and enabling them to achieve employment and exit employment more easily.

4.3. University Students Should Focus on Building Themselves and Establishing A Diverse Employment Philosophy

In order to achieve flexible employment, university students need to give full play to their initiative and focus on their own construction, in addition to the help of national policies. At

present, the domestic "employment market and industrial structure changes have objectively increased the difficulty of college students' employment" [12], college students are not fully aware of the current severe employment situation, and there are problems in employment competitiveness such as "insufficient work information collection and opportunity searching ability; their own comprehensive quality and employment In the aspect of employment competitiveness, there are problems such as "insufficient job information gathering and opportunity-seeking ability; insufficient comprehensive quality and employment ability; common problem of herding in employment choice and certain deviation in employment orientation. [12] For this reason, university students need to plan their career and employment expectations well in advance and improve their employability. In addition, students need to know specifically the requirements of enterprises for recruiting talents, and train themselves regularly in the process of study regarding employment.

In addition, there is room for improvement in the career choices of university students. As a result of the epidemic, the world economy is in the doldrums and the business situation of some enterprises has deteriorated, with some closing down and laying off a large number of staff. When choosing employment, university students are increasingly inclined towards stable jobs within the system. Under the influence of such a concept, the phenomenon of university students' employment being rolled towards the system has gradually emerged. To solve the problem of this non-benign employment competition that rolls towards the system, university students need to choose their careers flexibly and in a variety of ways according to their abilities, with an eye on their own construction.

4.4. Social Value Evaluation Should Be Diversified and Inclusive to Encourage Diversified Employment of University Students

At present, the change in employment values in China has not kept pace with the economic and social development, and many traditional values of career selection still remain in society. With the development of the economy, new professions with great potential for development have emerged in society. However, in the past, such professions were despised. Under the influence of this perception, university students give priority to professions with high social recognition when choosing a career. In recent years, the emergence of the phenomenon of university students' employment rolling towards the system is inseparable from the influence of society's inherent traditional evaluation of the value of career choice.

To weaken the tendency of college students' employment to the institutional rolls and avoid the phenomenon of vicious competition among college students to the institutional rolls, it is necessary for all sectors of society to abandon the employment concept of social recognition as a general judgment standard and replace it with a more pluralistic and inclusive employment concept, fully respecting the value of each occupation and holding a more open and inclusive attitude towards the newly emerged occupations. The employment of university students should respect the subjectivity of the university community and their career choices. The jobs within the system certainly have their advantages, but the jobs within the system are limited, and university students should be made aware that entering the system is not the only career choice. In addition, the employment of the university students is often directed towards the system, which makes them neglect their own individual characteristics.

Acknowledgments

This study is supported by the innovation and Entrepreneurship Training program for college Students in Hunan Province in 2021. Project title: An empirical study on the evolution of college students' employment values in the post-epidemic era-A case study of Hunan University of Arts and Sciences, Project Number: S202110549033.

References

- [1] People's Daily. Accelerating the construction of a new development pattern (In-depth study and implementation of Xi Jinping's socialist thought with Chinese characteristics for a new era [E B/O L]. 2021-05-12/2022-04-09
- [2] Wang Jie;Chen Shaohui. Research on the new development pattern of domestic and international dual cycle: review and outlook[J]. Finance and Accounting Monthly,,():.
- [3] Chinese government website. Hunan provincial government website. Annual report on employment quality of 2020 graduates from general colleges and universities in Hunan Province. [E B/O L].2021-08-12/2022-04-09
- [4] Our reporter Chen Xiaoyan, intern Luo Jielei. After graduation, we go to "break" the industry [N]. Workers' Daily, 2008-12-11.005.
- [5] Changsha Zhongguo Education. The number of recruits and job changes in various regions of Hunan Provincial Examination in previous years. [E B/O L].2022-02-14/2022-04-09
- [6] Sun Jun. The role and influence of traditional employment concept on college students' employment[J]. Journal of Changchun Higher Institute of Finance, 2011,(01):87-89.
- [7] Zhou Rong. The employment mentality of college students: the new normal and its response in the social ecological perspective[J]. Contemporary Youth Studies, 2022,(02):94-101.
- [8] Zhao Wen. Factors influencing the employment quality of college graduates and strategies to improve it [J]. Heilongjiang Higher Education Research,2022,40(02):133-138.
- [9] Wei Ying. Constructs and empirical research on employment intention assessment of graduates from general colleges and universities--a study of six general colleges and universities in Yunnan Province[J]. Higher Education Research,2017,38(02):61-66.
- [10] Liu He. Accelerating the construction of a new development pattern in which the domestic and international cycles are mutually reinforcing with the main domestic cycle[J]. Resource Recycling, 2021,(09):51-54.
- [11] Yu M. Gui; Fan Rui; Zhong Huijie. Industrial policy and enterprise technology innovation in China[J]. China Industrial Economy,2016,(12):5-22.
- [12] Zhou Wenxia;Li Shuoyu;Feng Yue. The current situation of research on college students' employment and college students' employment dilemma[J]. China University Employment, 2022, (07):3-8.