

# Analysis on the High-Quality Employment of University Students Under the Evolution of University Employment Mechanism

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**Abstract:** With the exploration and transformation from planned economy to socialist market economy since reform and opening up, China's economy has turned into a new stage of high-speed development. During this process, the employment mechanism of university students has experienced several transferring periods from unified distribution to independent selection which affects the supply and demand patterns among graduates and employers. Graduates have more opportunities to choose their future career based on their own interests, so colleges and universities have more responsibility to guide students build up view of employment. For college and university students, how to achieve high-quality employment is always their focus. For the university employment work, the transformation of view and contribution to fulfill high-quality employment is the emphasis of work so university education work should adapt to the development of the market economy. Achieving high-quality employment is closely linked to the development of national economy and prosperity as well as the graduates' personal development and value realization. Colleges and universities should adjust their cultivation mode to satisfy the demands of market economy. To achieve this goal, platforms and mechanisms are required to establish for multi-discipline courses, practical teaching, career planning and students' employment capacities completely to improve graduates' professional qualities and employment skills. Universities need to make the most of social resources, cultivation support and family-school cooperation to promote high-quality employment.

**Keywords:** Employment, Mechanism Evolution, University Students, High-Quality

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## 1. Introduction

Employment, one of the statistical indicators of the national economy, is one of the most important livelihood and economic development issues. Youth employment especially college graduate employment relates to people's well-being, economic development and future. Over the 40 years of history since reform and opening up, the amount of college and university graduates has raised rapidly (as in figure 1) that in 2023 the amount of graduation is supposed to reach up to 12 million. As one of the main forces of the employment market, university graduates have greatly promoted social development. When students get involved in the social business, the choices they make will influence the future of themselves and their families. The employment mechanism has transferred into the mode of independent and

mutual choice employment system under great concern. As the participants and promoters of national economic and social development, university students have faced different opportunities and challenges. However, achieving high-quality employment is always the target of students as well as educators in higher education. Promoting the employment of college graduates requires the government, colleges and universities, employers and relevant social organizations to perform their respective duties [1]. It is closely related to social harmony and campus stability which has become one of the most discussed topics for college and university. This paper is aimed at providing more guidance for current universities to be aware of the importance for improving employment mechanism and taking actions of adapt to the requirements of the new period.

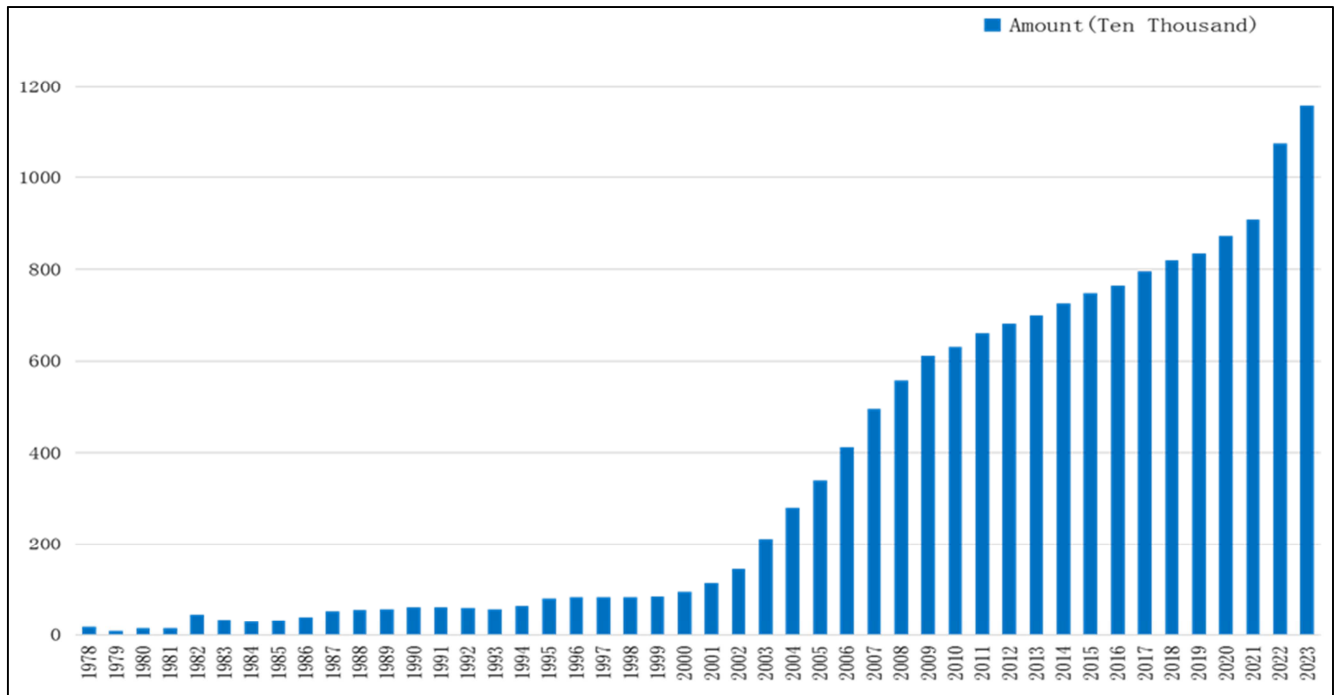


Figure 1. The amount of college graduates from 1978 to 2023.

## 2. The Evolution of University Employment Mechanism

Since the reform and opening up, in order to adapt to the development of socialist market economy and the change of talent supply and demand, China's university employment mechanism has changed from government-responsible to market-leading and from unified distribution to autonomous choice. The transformation period can be divided into three parts.

### 2.1. From Unified Distribution to Supply-and-Demand Connection

From 1977 to 1983, the traditional unified enrollment distribution mode was kept after the resumption of college entrance examination system., which means government assigned graduates in a mandatory scheme. College graduates, as high-quality talents in short supply, were required to obey the needs of national economic and social development to get the assigned work. In 1983, state council made the decision to set up a platform between school and employers, which can better combine cultivation, distribution and use together [2]. However, this method was only carried out in some specified universities. Universities and employers met and communicated about the major and employment demand, then the university-planned distribution projects were reported into the whole unified distribution projects. Although this was a relatively minority of trials, it broke up the employment policies over the past years which solves the problems that the students and employers were totally out of touch before graduation and began the times of graduate distribution system reform.

### 2.2. From Supply-and-Demand Connection to Two-Way Selection

In 1985, state council of the People's Republic of China issued the "Decision on the reform and development of education in China", which proposed to reform the enrollment plan and graduate distribution system of universities to change the policy that the job of graduates was unified allocated [3]. In 1988, most of the universities in Beijing started the method of supply-and-demand connection or two-way selection. Some enterprises were allowed to set up the recruitment stalls on campus to make graduates know more about the social demand and have the opportunity to introduce themselves to the companies. In 1989, "Reform plan for graduates' distribution system in institutions of higher learning" clearly proposed a "two-way selection" employment mechanism that graduates and employers can meet and communicate about the job demand. If both sides can achieve the intent of cooperation, the related departments in school should issue the dispatch certificate to verify the qualification that students will work in the company that they have agreed on [4]. Compared with the previous mechanism, two-way selection increases the options for both students and companies that graduates can choose their own satisfactory units for employment, while employers can hire the better candidates. However, this method was still a part of national-planned allocation instead of job-hunting by self-determination in the true sense.

### 2.3. From Two-Way Selection to Mutual Choice Employment

In 1993, "Guideline of the national educational reform and development" set out the goal to basically realize the

transformation of the old and new systems until 2000 and make the majority of graduates choose their career discretionarily [5]. In December 1999, Ministry of education dispatched the notice that since 2000 the dispatch certificate will be replaced by registration Certificate. The change showed the signal that mutual choice employment was officially carried out. The establishment of a fully autonomous position for graduates in employment is of great significance to the establishment of an employment mechanism of non-allocation, competitive employment and selective employment. The framework of graduate-allocation was basically settled. In May 2022, the General Office of the State Council issued "Notice of further support the youth employment and entrepreneurship work especially university graduates" that put forward the proposal to abolish the employment registration certificate orderly [6]. Since January 1st 2023, the registration certificate, as an important and essential material for graduates allocation, is canceled, which shows the evolution of university employment mechanism get into a brand new period.

### 3. The Characteristics of the Evolution of University Employment Mechanism

There are many reasons for the great changes in the university employment mechanism, among which the main one is the economic and social transition brought about by the reform and opening up. The economic transition and social transition inevitably lead to the changes in the structure and mode of talent demand, and the enrollment and employment mechanism of colleges and universities also change accordingly. All the related departments would go through the challenges which may face some difficulties and be brought different feedback and breakthroughs. In general, the mechanism evolution fully mobilized the enthusiasm of college students which promoted the continuous increase of the total amount of social employment and the optimization of the employment structure, thus vigorously promoting the long-term and rapid development of the national economy.

#### 3.1. From Government's Perspective

The overall evolution process is aimed at serving the national economic and social development process. Before reform and opening up, unified enrollment and allocation adapted to the needs of the planned economy. Government needed to set up the plan which meets the urgent need for talents for national construction. On the one hand, it greatly increased the burden of government and may cause the problem that graduates cannot do the job which matches their major or meets their requirements, so the talent resources may get wasted. It is affected by the times and social system. The reform is also deepening with the development of society, so as to achieve the optimal strategy combination at that time. With the advancement of the evolution process, the government has delegated more power to universities and employers, which has also stimulated their vitality and met the

needs of social development and progress.

#### 3.2. From Universities' Perspective

Universities, as an important base for talent cultivation, should cultivate talents suitable for the development of the country and society at any stage, and encourage the growth of individual students. Before the reform and opening up, colleges and universities had to coordinate national plans with student majors which had limited autonomy. Majors were set up to meet national needs and universities spent lots of time coordinating the higher enterprises. The process of reform has allowed universities to expand their autonomy and create an atmosphere more conducive to promoting the smooth employment of college students, and gradually improving the employment rate of college students [7]. Universities can cultivate talents adapting to economic and social development from the source, and can focus on talent cultivation to empower students from various aspects, which develops the ability to learn scientific and cultural knowledge along with mental health.

#### 3.3. From Companies' Perspective

Seeking continuous development and creating profits are companies' main goals. Before the reform and opening up, employers could only passively receive college students assigned by the universities and they didn't have any choice. Regardless of whether the assigned college students meet the development needs of the employer, they must be assigned to their work positions, resulting in the resource mismatch and waste to a certain degree. During the evolution process, the right to choose employers has been expanded, and employers have gradually had the right to choose the outstanding college graduates who they really need. This has injected vitality into the development of employers and enhanced their own development potential and stamina. It enabled suitable students to contribute intellectual power in a right position while enabling employers to concentrate on their main business to unleash the creativity of talents, thereby driving the development of the entire society forward.

#### 3.4. From Graduates' Perspective

Everyone will consider their own personal development and future career. There are different development stages with different development paths. For the individual, there are both advantages and disadvantages in this evolution process. Before the reform and opening-up, the working place and industry was completely assigned by school. Students didn't have the opportunity to choose their job. The salary was paid according to unified standard so the job they get may not be satisfied [8]. The process of evolution was to gradually introduce a competitive mechanism, increasing the opportunity and power of individual choice, thereby stimulating the learning enthusiasm of individual students. Only by working hard to learn cultural knowledge and improve their comprehensive abilities in various aspects can they settle a good foundation for seeking a satisfactory

company when they graduate in the future. Overall, it stimulates the vitality of college students and conforms to the routine of talent growth.

### **3.5. From Labor Market's Perspective**

#### **3.5.1. The Concept of Employment Has the Trend to Shift to Marketization**

Bidirectional selection and independent job selection through the labor market have become the most important way of job selection. Based on the needs of personal development, it can be adjusted among various employers based on personal willingness, which can break the boundaries of regions and industries. Up to now, the flow of college students' employment has gradually evolved into a two-way flow between towns and villages, eastern regions and central and western regions, large cities and small and medium-sized cities, and public and non-public ownership. This change indicates that the concept of employment through the market has gradually been widely accepted.

#### **3.5.2. The Employment Channel Has Become Diversified**

At the beginning of reform and opening-up, unified employment distribution was implemented and the employment channel of college students was single and restricted. With the development of market economy, more and more college students chose private enterprises, foreign-funded enterprises or engaged in self-employment to achieve employment. State-owned enterprises were not the only choice of employment for students that they can make choices among all kinds of enterprises. Students had more options on the region of work including city and countryside which can meet the needs for talents in all industries and lead the balanced and sustainable development of the entire country and socio-economic.

#### **3.5.3. The Employment Formation Has Turned to Be More Flexible**

The employment formation has turned out to be more flexible. The traditional form of employment is a labor-employment relationship centered on the workplace. With the progress of time and development of labor market, the new employment formation is oriented toward working tasks. Many flexible work has appeared without the limitation of time and working place. Some employment forms such as part-time job, freelance and employment on network platform has appeared to fit in with the needs of flexible employment for both enterprises and employees, which improves the allocation efficiency of labor resources and provide workers with new options for balancing work and life. Flexible employment arrangements, which are expected to become more popular in the future, allow employees more room to choose employers and plan how they do their jobs, and allow enterprises to reduce fixed manpower costs and meet their flexible staffing needs [9]. The effect of the change also applied to university students.

## **4. Suggestions for High Quality Employment of College Students**

### **4.1. Exerting Personal Value Is the Core**

The employment of university graduates is influenced not only by the macro-environment but also by the attributes of university graduates themselves [10]. Both of them play a role in the system of university employment mechanism. College students are the masters of their own life. Only if they establish lofty ideals and long-term goals and put in effort on tempering willpower and improving knowledge and skills can they get more opportunities of development. College students should set firm goals to develop good habits of time management and emotion control. It is important for them to make personalized career and academic planning. Many essential skills such as communication, cooperation, critical thinking and innovation which employers value need to be attached to great importance during college cultivation. "Practice makes perfect." Problems may be easily solved under more practical experiences, so it is essential to develop good qualities such as honesty and dedication.

### **4.2. Talents Cultivation System in Higher Education Is the Foundation**

#### **4.2.1. The Adaptation Among Enrollment and Cultivation and Employment Is the Key Factor in the Mechanism**

It is crucial to review the working mechanism of guidance on employment in colleges and universities to enhance the market competitiveness of college graduates and to improve strategies for successful employment of college students [11]. Only when college students enter the employment market can they be truly transformed into the driving force of talents. Whether in the unified division and distribution stage that followed the distribution of nation or in the independent selection period that match talents with the job requirement, employers always have more discretion on the talents selection. Meanwhile, as the frontier of the talent market, enterprises have more sensitive perception and resilience to social and economic development and can quickly feedback to the requirement of the talent market, which directly affects the quality and amount of employment. Talents training in colleges and universities should be fundamentally oriented to serve and promote national economic and social development. The design of training programs and teaching plans should keep up with the market changes that constantly improve the matching degree between the results of talent training and the needs of employers, which form an effective closed-loop between supply and demand.

#### **4.2.2. The Precise Supply of Employment Market Resources Is the Key to the Channel**

Colleges and universities are the important connection platform for college students and employers, which indicates that the characteristics of colleges and universities and the quality of talent training are important endorsements for college students' employment. The school should pay great

attention to the employment market development and employer relationship maintenance, which can form the reputation advantage in the specialized field and ensure the full coverage of the target employment market for the majors set up, so as to build more employment supply and demand docking platforms for students. Specifically, universities should build the main channel of campus recruitment, organize campus recruitment activities, assist employers to do a good job of recruitment publicity, and provide customized services for each enterprise. It is important to expand employment resources that pay attention to the changes in employment market demand and take the initiative to dovetail with the demand for talents of national development strategies. Paying attention to the emerging industry especially some small, medium and micro enterprises can provide more choices for students to find jobs. Universities should establish a smart digital employment platform to combine with the new media matrix that can help to open up the campus recruitment information channels and ensure that the school recruitment service is accurate. All the above are aimed at providing strong support for high-quality employment of college students.

#### ***4.2.3. Personalized Employment Guidance Service Is the Guarantee***

Establishing the conceptual framework of employment education and the system of employment guidance that is tailored to the individual and to the time is important. It is essential to cultivating students' objective and rational outlook on talent, career and employment, correctly understanding their personal conditions and social needs, choosing careers and jobs from a practical point of view, clarifying career intentions and developing employment competitiveness as early as possible. Employment guidance education and career planning of college students should run through the whole learning process of students [12]. Educators on career planning should make continuous education plans to cover the whole process in the university. Students can develop the professional skills and identify their employment targets in the first or second semester in the university through enhancing students' knowledge of different industries and careers with systematic courses, thematic lectures and internship practice. Improving students' ability on making resumes, preparing interviews and other job-seeking aspects and strengthening guidance on psychological stress relief and emotional management during the job-seeking period can help students prepare psychological guidance in job hunting and cultivate healthy job hunting psychology covering the whole process of students' growth and job-seeking. To optimize the employment service system and promote the convenience of employment services, the related departments need to make adjustments on simplifying the process of employment procedures that can bring more convenience reducing the time and space restrictions on the procedures. Meanwhile, colleges and universities across the country should widely apply the new mode of Internet plus employment, and carry out precise docking services according to the needs of graduates and employers through the new

career network, smart employment and other platforms [13], covering online recruitment promotion activities and one versus one consulting guidance to achieve online promotion of enterprises. Relevant services are needed such as promoting online interviews between students and enterprises, and online consultation. Some facilities and tools such as career assessment tools, career education online courses and virtual interview rooms can be applied to build a hardware and software guarantee system covering the whole process of student employment.

### ***4.3. Social Support Is the Safeguard***

#### ***4.3.1. The Co-education Between Family and School Is a Systematic Guarantee***

Family and school need to cooperate to build up a positive environment for students to develop and encourage student to spend a meaningful life during university. Home-school co-education should establish a systematic concept that parents and teachers need to establish a relationship of trust mutually to closely collaborate and comply with both duties. Both sides should play their roles and maintain effective interaction at each stage of college students' adaptation to school including entrance adaptation, accumulation and employment so as to better lead students to grow and become successful. It is worth noting that colleges and universities have educational resources and intellectual advantages. While paying attention to cultivating students, they also need to extend to deliver school's spiritual core and humanistic care to parents in the form of open courses and open days to impart scientific educational concepts, knowledge and methods. The interactive activities are hosted by school and participated by families and society to improve the education of schools and promote students' all-round development [14]. Gathering parents' consensus and guiding students to make good planning, rational choices together so the universities and families can work together to guide students to make appropriate planning and make rational choices.

#### ***4.3.2. Alumni Resources Are the Fundamental Guarantee for Schools***

Alumni are one of the most valuable resources for colleges and universities, which is the direct manifestation of the quality and social prestige of colleges and universities, and also an important link for colleges and universities to expand social connection and strive for job resources. Alumni from various industries have experienced different stages of career development and accumulated professional ability and characteristics, so they have understanding on the abilities and qualities that the job market values in college students' employment from practical perspective and bring mentorship and guidance to current students. They can set up information channels to effectively feedback to the talent cultivation link of the university, and also guide college students on knowledge learning, skill cultivation, career planning and workplace perception. With the support of alumni, universities can better stimulate the learning target, initiative and enthusiasm of college students. At the same time, alumni

from different industries also grasp various information, channels and job resources to promote school-enterprise and school-city cooperation, which can provide more employment and entrepreneurial resources and opportunities for graduates and students in a younger grade.

#### 4.3.3. Social Inclusion Is the Environmental Guarantee

Many external factors such as social evaluation, employment environment, media broadcasts have an important influence on college students' employment selection. The employment opportunities and employment structure adjustment brought by the international and domestic economic and social development situation and the new generation of scientific and technological revolution bring more employment options and adjustments on the employment structure. There are more and more channels for college graduates to obtain employment and entrepreneurial information, especially online media channels [15]. The hidden employment discrimination like gender and age, as well as the frequent sense of social comparison brought by some popular posts on social platforms such as TikTok, Bilibili and Little Red Book, is more likely to arise negative emotions such as anxiety and depression among college students, which may bring some negative influence on students' employment concepts and behaviors. Therefore, for the relevant government departments, it is necessary to implement a more powerful supervision and restraint and incentive system. For employers, it is encouraged to adopt a more open and tolerant attitude and a more scientific and reasonable selection and employment mechanism to avoid some unfairness during the enrollment process. For social media, it is their responsibility to create a more positive public opinion environment in order to provide a more favourable public opinion environment for the diversified employment and high-quality employment of college students to create a healthy social environment.

## 5. Conclusion

Over the past 40 years of reform and opening up, the national economic and social development has made world-renowned achievements, and the construction of China's labor market has been remarkable, and a series of important achievements have been made in the field of employment. However, until now, as one of the key groups and important human resources in the field of employment, the employment of college students is still the focus of social attention. Therefore, based on the current needs of social development, talent growth and high-quality employment of college students, colleges and universities should form a working pattern of promoting employment for all staff, plan and mobilize the strength of all parties in multiple dimensions, gather employment synergy, help students strengthen their ability and add help in the whole process of employment, and fully promote college students' smooth and early employment. Colleges and universities will try their best to promote college students' employment on time and promote the high-quality

and adequate employment of college students.

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