Strategies for Cultivating Students' Employability under the Severe Employment Situation

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Abstract: *Against the backdrop of global economic structural changes and technological progress, the severe employment situation has brought unprecedented challenges to the employment of college students. Facing the complex and ever-changing job market, the cultivation of students' employability is particularly important. This paper explores that in addition to solid professional knowledge, students also need to possess interdisciplinary knowledge, innovative thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities. In addition, the concept of lifelong learning and the cultivation of self-learning ability are also important ways to help students adapt to changes in the workplace and improve their professional ethics. By strengthening the cultivation of practical abilities, improving comprehensive qualities, and providing guidance on career planning, educational institutions can provide better employment support for students and help them stand out in the future workplace.*

Keywords: *severe employment situation, student employability, interdisciplinary competence, lifelong learning*

1. Introduction

With the changing global economic situation and the advancement of technological revolution, the traditional job market is undergoing unprecedented changes. In recent years, emerging technologies such as automation, artificial intelligence, and digital transformation have continuously penetrated into various industries, driving profound adjustments in industrial structure. However, with technological innovation, the labor market is facing severe challenges, and graduates face enormous employment pressure. According to statistical data, in recent years, countries around the world, especially China, it have been facing challenges such as an increasing number of college graduates and a shortage of job opportunities, making the employment situation for students increasingly severe.

In this context, the issue of employment ability for college graduates has become an urgent focus that needs to be addressed. Although students have accumulated academic abilities, theoretical knowledge, and other aspects, the practical work experience, interdisciplinary comprehensive abilities, innovative thinking, and problem-solving skills required in the workplace often become key factors determining their employment success or failure. Students generally face the dilemma of "learning more but using less", and there is a significant disconnect between the traditional education system and the demands of the job market. Therefore, how to effectively enhance students' employability, especially in the complex and ever-changing employment environment, to enhance their market competitiveness, has become a core issue that urgently needs attention in the field of education today.

This paper aims to analyze the cultivation path of students' employability under the severe employment situation. By delving into the changes in the employment situation, the employment difficulties faced by students, and the constituent elements of their abilities, this article will summarize the challenges that universities face in cultivating students' employment abilities, and propose corresponding optimization strategies and practical suggestions. By strengthening the cultivation of professional abilities and comprehensive qualities, promoting school enterprise cooperation, optimizing educational content and employment guidance system, we hope to provide valuable theoretical basis and practical guidance for higher education and student employment, help students better adapt to the needs of the future workplace, and achieve personal career development success.

2. The constituent elements of students' employability

2.1 Professional competence and scientific and technological capabilities

Professional competence refers to students' ability to apply basic knowledge and acquired knowledge in certain professional fields, including professional theoretical knowledge, professional skills, and organizational management abilities [1]. It not only means the theoretical knowledge that students learn in the classroom, but also involves how to apply this knowledge to practical work. It can be seen that professional competence is a key factor for every graduate to smoothly enter the workplace.

In the rapidly developing social environment of technology, the development of science and technology plays a crucial role. Whether it is computer technology, artificial intelligence, big data analysis, or industry-specific software application skills, these technical skills have become basic requirements for many positions. For example, students majoring in electrical engineering and automation need to master digital and analog circuits, computer technology signal and system analysis, computer control technology, and computer networks. Students majoring in information technology need to master various technologies used in information acquisition, organization, processing, transmission, storage, and utilization. Therefore, for students, in addition to strengthening their theoretical knowledge learning, they should also actively participate in school organized internships, practical training, and other activities to further improve their scientific and technological abilities.

In recent years, with the continuous advancement of technology, the requirements for professional skills in many professions have also changed. Many traditional professions are being replaced by automation and artificial intelligence, while emerging positions such as data scientists and artificial intelligence engineers require deeper technical skills. Therefore, students should continuously learn and adapt to new technological developments, constantly improve their professional abilities and technical skills, in order to maintain competitiveness in the future workplace.

2.2 Comprehensive quality and core competition

In addition to professional ability, comprehensive quality is another important factor for students to stand out. Comprehensive quality refers to a series of soft skills related to work, such as interdisciplinary knowledge, communication ability, teamwork ability, leadership ability, innovation ability, etc. of students [2]. The modern workplace no longer relies solely on a particular professional skill, but places greater emphasis on an individual's overall quality and comprehensive abilities. Communication skills are crucial. Clear and effective communication, whether in team collaboration or with clients, can help employees better express their views, coordinate work, and solve problems. Secondly, teamwork and collaboration skills are another essential element that cannot be ignored. In today's workplace, teamwork is the norm for completing work, especially in complex projects where cross departmental and cross disciplinary collaboration is particularly common. Teamwork not only requires students to have strong coordination skills, but also a strong sense of responsibility and team spirit.

In addition, innovation ability is also an important manifestation of students' core competitiveness. With the changing industry environment and technological advancements, innovation ability has become an indispensable quality in the workplace. In the process of learning, students not only need to master existing knowledge, but also need to cultivate problem-solving abilities, possess independent thinking and innovative spirit, so as to find new breakthroughs in future work and bring more competitive advantages to enterprises.

2.3 Employment cognition and psychological quality

Employment cognition and psychological quality are important guarantees for students to maintain a good mentality and effectively cope with challenges when facing complex and ever-changing job markets. With the increasingly fierce social competition, many students are prone to confusion and anxiety in the process of employment. Therefore, helping students establish correct employment concepts and cultivate good psychological qualities has become an important component of improving their employability. Employment cognition refers to students' understanding of the current job market situation, salary levels, industry development, and their own career development plans. Students do not have clear goals when it comes to employment, and their understanding of the demands of the job

market is not deep enough, making it difficult for them to choose careers that match their interests and abilities correctly [3]. Therefore, the primary task of universities is to cultivate students' employment concept of job matching, and choose suitable positions based on their personal characteristics, interests, and advantages. At the same time, we need to consider the impact of strong psychological resilience on the job search process. In a market economy society, there is fierce competition and pressure, and the improvement of students' psychological qualities such as stress resistance, adaptability, and emotional management will bring many employment opportunities to them. We believe that effectively eliminating students' anxiety, tension, or lack of confidence in their psychological state mainly involves training them in self psychological counseling, emotional management, and other methods to cultivate their good psychological qualities, help them enhance their confidence and adaptability, and thus enhance their competitiveness in the job search process.

2.4 Career planning and development

Career planning and development is a plan that students need to carefully consider from the beginning of entering university. It is the key to enhancing employability, and it is a comprehensive thinking and systematic planning for future career paths. We analyze its importance from the following three aspects. Firstly, students are required to have a clear understanding of themselves, including self-evaluation of their interests, personal strengths, values, etc. At the same time, when choosing a career, external factors such as industry development trends, job demands, and salary and benefits should be considered, which helps to recognize the current situation, enhance job seeking abilities, and choose a career direction that is suitable for their own development. Secondly, career development is a long-term process. With the changing demands of technology and society, it is necessary to continuously improve the career goals set by individuals in the early stages, engage in lifelong learning in the workplace, enhance professional skills and comprehensive qualities, in order to adapt to the sustainable development of students' careers. Thirdly, universities and employers offer internships, practical training, employment guidance, and career planning courses; Through school enterprise cooperation and employment service platforms and other resources, we guide students' career development, help them better plan their careers, and enhance their lifelong essential employability skills.

3. The current situation and challenges of cultivating employment ability in universities

With the rapid development of the social economy and the increasingly fierce competition in the job market, vocational education in talent cultivation in universities has gradually become a key area of focus. However, although many universities have realized the importance of cultivating employability and have made certain explorations and attempts in education, overall, the current cultivation of employability in universities still faces many challenges and shortcomings. Specifically, the problem can be analyzed from the following aspects.

3.1 Current situation of cultivating employment ability in universities

In recent years, with the increasing attention of the country to employment issues, major universities have strengthened the cultivation of students' employability. Many universities have made employability an important component of their teaching plans, offering a series of related activities such as employment guidance courses, employment skills training classes, and career planning. In addition, some universities also strive to improve students' professional ethics and practical abilities through cooperation with enterprises, conducting internship and practical activities, and establishing employment service centers.

At the same time, more and more universities realize that simply cultivating subject knowledge is no longer sufficient to meet the multidimensional needs of modern workplaces for talents. In addition to professional knowledge, "soft skills" such as communication ability, teamwork ability, innovation ability, and stress resistance have also been included in the training objectives. Some universities help students adapt to the workplace environment in advance and improve their employment competitiveness through simulated interviews, corporate visits, career development salons, and other forms.

However, there are still many problems in cultivating employability, especially in terms of the connection between practical operation and market demand, which has led to the increasingly

prominent contradiction between the employment situation and talent cultivation.

3.2 Main problems existing

Although universities have taken various measures to enhance students' employability, there are still a series of problems in practical operation that affect the effectiveness of employability training and further exacerbate the problem of difficult employment for college students.

3.2.1 The disconnect between theoretical education and practical ability, and the disconnect between professional education and market demand

Currently, many universities still place too much emphasis on imparting theoretical knowledge and neglect the cultivation of practical abilities. The knowledge acquired by students on campus is often difficult to directly translate into practical skills required for the workplace. This kind of "talk on paper" situation often makes students feel at a loss when facing practical problems in their work after entering the workplace. For example, some majors have outdated course content and teaching methods that are out of touch with the actual needs of modern enterprises, resulting in a gap between graduates' skills and the requirements of employers.

In addition, the professional settings of some universities are still relatively traditional and have not kept up with the new trends of industry development in a timely manner. Although some emerging majors such as big data and artificial intelligence have received attention in recent years, the curriculum systems of most universities have not yet been closely integrated with the cutting-edge technological developments in the industry. This leads to many students facing the dilemma of "not being able to find a job" after graduation, even if they have obtained a degree in college, because the knowledge they have learned does not match the demand of the market.

3.2.2 Shortcomings of employment guidance services: Many universities lack targeted and personalized employment guidance

Employment guidance is an important part of cultivating employment ability in universities, but there are certain shortcomings in the current employment guidance services provided by many universities. Firstly, the content of employment guidance is relatively single, lacking specificity and personalization. Most employment guidance activities are limited to basic content such as employment policy explanations, resume writing guidance, and interview skills training, and often take a one size fits all approach, failing to provide more effective services based on the characteristics of different disciplines, majors, and personalized needs of students.

Secondly, many universities have the problem of information asymmetry in their employment guidance services. On the one hand, students have insufficient understanding of the job market information, and many graduates do not realize that their career development direction should be planned based on personal interests and abilities, but blindly follow the trend and choose popular industries. On the other hand, there are deviations in the requirements of employers for graduates, and some companies' recruitment needs cannot be timely integrated with the information systems of universities, resulting in students missing out on suitable employment opportunities. In addition, most of the employment guidance teachers in universities come from academic backgrounds and lack certain industry practical experience. Therefore, in the process of career guidance, they are unable to provide advice with sufficient industry depth and foresight. The limitations of employment guidance services also make it difficult for students to receive practical and effective help when facing job pressure.

3.2.3 Misconceptions about students' employability and excessive employment pressure

Many students have misconceptions about their employability, overly relying on their education and academic background, and neglecting the importance placed on "soft skills" such as communication, teamwork, and innovative thinking in the workplace. Students often fail to realize the importance of these abilities, leading to significant adaptation pressure upon entering the workplace. In addition, with the increasing number of graduates and intensified competition in the job market, students not only face high-intensity job competition, but also often experience anxiety due to pressure, excessively pursuing high paying positions or well-known enterprises, neglecting personal interests and career development potential. Although universities have made some progress in cultivating employability, they still face challenges such as how to combine theory with practice and provide personalized employment guidance. Only through systematic training of employability, alignment of professional courses with industry demands, and comprehensive employment guidance can we effectively enhance the employment competitiveness of college students, help them enter the workplace smoothly, and achieve

career development.

4. Strategies and paths to enhance students' employability

With the development of society and the increasing complexity of the job market, students' employability not only depends on the mastery of professional knowledge, but also requires comprehensive qualities, practical experience, career planning, and other aspects. Therefore, universities need to adopt systematic strategies and paths to enhance students' employability.

4.1 Deepen industry academia cooperation and enhance practical opportunities

The primary way to enhance students' employability is to strengthen cooperation with society and enterprises, and enhance students' practical experience. Practice is a key step in transforming theoretical knowledge into practical abilities. Therefore, universities should actively promote industry university research cooperation, build school enterprise cooperation platforms, carry out diversified internships and practical training activities, promote students' participation in practical projects and enterprise tasks, and enhance their problem-solving abilities. Specific measures include: firstly, strengthening school enterprise cooperation, establishing long-term cooperative relationships with industry leaders and innovative enterprises, jointly designing talent training programs that meet industry needs, jointly developing courses and internship projects, allowing enterprises to directly participate in teaching and impart the latest industry knowledge and skills; Secondly, broaden internship channels and encourage students to intern in different types of enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises, start-up companies, and non-profit organizations. These enterprises can provide diverse practical environments and tasks to help students gain a more comprehensive understanding of industry trends and market demands; Thirdly, establish innovation and entrepreneurship bases, encourage students to participate in entrepreneurship, set up innovation and entrepreneurship incubators and maker spaces, provide entrepreneurship training and financial support, help students accumulate practical experience, improve innovation ability and risk tolerance. Through the above effective measures, students can accumulate practical social experience and vocational skills, and thus have a significant competitive advantage in job hunting.

4.2 Strengthen career planning and employment guidance

Career planning and employment guidance are important aspects of cultivating students' employability. Universities should provide scientific career planning guidance to help students understand themselves, recognize the market, and find a suitable career path. Meanwhile, efficient employment guidance services can provide students with multi-dimensional and multi-level employment support, increasing employment opportunities. To this end, universities can take multiple specific measures: firstly, offering career planning courses to help students understand the characteristics of different career fields and master the methods and skills of career planning during the enrollment stage. The courses should be tailored to students' interests, abilities, and career goals, providing personalized planning; Secondly, establish a career counseling system, equip each student with a career counselor, provide one-on-one guidance, and help students develop clear career goals based on their interests, career tendencies, and academic background; Thirdly, regularly organize employment guidance lectures, job fairs, and enterprise visits, inviting industry experts to have face-to-face exchanges with students, introducing industry trends, career requirements, and job seeking skills, and enhancing students' confidence in job seeking; Finally, strengthen the construction and utilization of alumni networks, organize alumni to share employment experiences and career development paths, provide employment information and suggestions, and motivate students to establish correct employment concepts. Through the implementation of these measures, students can clarify their career development direction earlier, improve their job search efficiency and success rate.

4.3 Strengthen the awareness of interdisciplinary learning and lifelong learning

With the earth shaking changes in society and the rapid development of technology, career demands and job content are constantly changing. Students need to have interdisciplinary knowledge backgrounds and a lifelong learning awareness to cope with the rapidly changing social development. Firstly, utilizing the lifelong learning platform and resources provided by the school, as well as the employment training and online course training software developed through school enterprise

cooperation, to help students improve their professional skills and ensure that they can keep up with the latest industry trends in a timely manner. Secondly, the school encourages students to learn and communicate across disciplines by offering interdisciplinary courses, joint lectures and forums, broadening their knowledge base, enhancing their cross disciplinary thinking abilities, and improving their adaptability and innovation skills in complex workplace environments. Thirdly, cultivate students' habits of active and lifelong learning, and help them continuously enhance their professional competitiveness. We advocate for students to learn independently, strengthen the concept of interdisciplinary learning, maintain a lifelong learning awareness, calmly face current employment challenges, lay a solid foundation for future career development, and design a good future career path.

5. Conclusion

In the current severe employment situation, the cultivation of students' employability is particularly important. With the acceleration of technological progress, industrial transformation, and globalization, the demands of the traditional job market are constantly changing, requiring students not only to possess solid professional knowledge, but also to have interdisciplinary perspectives, innovative thinking, and flexible adaptability. Therefore, higher education must keep pace with the times and focus on cultivating students' comprehensive qualities, especially their cross disciplinary knowledge structure and ability for continuous learning.

Schools should actively promote interdisciplinary learning and cross disciplinary communication, broaden students' knowledge, and cultivate their adaptability and problem-solving abilities in complex workplace environments. The promotion of the concept of lifelong learning and the construction of lifelong learning platforms provide students with more opportunities for skill improvement, enabling them to develop in sync with the constantly changing industry demands. In addition, the cultivation of students' self-learning ability is also crucial, which not only helps them quickly integrate into the workplace after graduation, but also helps them continuously improve themselves in their career and maintain competitiveness in the face of the ever-changing job market.

In short, the severe employment situation requires students to possess multidimensional abilities to cope with the challenges of the future workplace. Through effective guidance and support from universities, students can continuously improve themselves and achieve long-term career development goals in an uncertain employment environment. Education and society should work together to provide students with a more comprehensive system for cultivating their employability, in order to promote the common progress of individuals and society.

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