

Research on Cultivating and Improving the Employment Competitiveness of Application-oriented Undergraduate Students

Qingxu Xin

School of Marxism, Lingnan Normal University, Zhanjiang, 524048, China

Abstract

As an important part of the higher education system, application-oriented undergraduate universities undertake the important mission of cultivating high-quality talents with practical ability and innovative spirit. However, in the current complex and changeable job market, how to effectively improve the employment competitiveness of application-oriented undergraduate students, so that they can quickly adapt to the market demand, has become an urgent problem to be solved. This paper focuses on the path and strategy of cultivating and improving the employment competitiveness of application-oriented undergraduate students, including optimizing the curriculum, strengthening practical teaching, improving the employment guidance service and deepening the cooperation between schools and enterprises. Through the in-depth analysis of the implementation effect and influencing factors of these strategies, the purpose is to provide useful reference for the improvement of employment competitiveness of application-oriented undergraduate students.

Keywords

Application-oriented Undergraduate College; Employment Competitiveness; Cultivation Path.

1. Introduction

With the continuous progress of society and the continuous development of economy, higher education has increasingly become the core driving force of national development [1]. As an important part of the higher education system, application-oriented undergraduate colleges and universities bear the important mission of cultivating high-quality talents with practical ability and innovative spirit. However, in the current complex and changeable job market, how to effectively improve the employment competitiveness of application-oriented undergraduate students, so that they can quickly adapt to the market demand, has become an urgent problem to be solved. The employment of college students is affected by many factors, including the objective factors such as the change of population structure, the change of employment mode, the change of market demand and the poor supply mechanism. It also includes subjective factors such as psychological expectation, employment motivation and work vision. From the actual situation, the number of college graduates in China is increasing year by year, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Education, the total number of college graduates in 2022 has exceeded 10 million, and in 2024 it is 12 million [2-3]. In recent years, the employment quality of fresh graduates is generally not high, according to relevant statistics, the highest professional counterpart rate of fresh graduates is only 64.20%, the lowest is only 5.92%, and the unemployment rate reached 17.60% three months after graduation [4]. Application-oriented undergraduate universities play an important role in cultivating high-quality talents with practical ability and innovative spirit. Through in-depth discussion on the cultivation and promotion of employment competitiveness, it is not difficult to find that optimizing curriculum, strengthening practical teaching, improving teachers, improving employment guidance

services and deepening school-enterprise cooperation are the key strategies to improve students' employment competitiveness.

For the cultivation of college students' employment competitiveness, theoretical research and practice have accumulated more valuable experience [5]. Some scholars believe that employability has become an important criterion to measure talents, and teaching aimed at improving employability is the main channel to improve teaching quality. Therefore, management and incentive mechanism should be improved, teaching activities should be standardized, and teachers and students should be encouraged to participate in practical teaching activities in order to acquire relevant professional skills. At present, the research and practice of application-oriented undergraduate colleges on the cultivation of college students' employment competitiveness mainly include the following: First, precise cultivation. Mainly according to the social needs of the appropriate revision of the personnel training program, according to the needs of employers to adjust the personnel training objectives, so as to promote the employment of college students with their majors, positions, social needs. Second, participatory cultivation. The "dual system" talent training mode of enterprise participation emphasizes the combination of theory and production practice, highlighting the accumulation of knowledge and technology application, and enterprises and schools cooperate to establish practice bases and sign preliminary work contracts, which can not only guarantee the long-term development of practical education, but also solve the worries of each subject. In terms of teaching design, in addition to following government or industry standards, the school also invites enterprises to participate in the formulation of teaching plans to ensure that the teaching plans are connected with reality and the talents cultivated meet the needs of society. Third, the cultivation of comprehensive quality. Informationization makes the communication between different business departments of employers more convenient, and the business boundaries are increasingly blurred. Employers put forward higher requirements for the comprehensive quality of fresh college students, so colleges and universities pay more attention to the cultivation of comprehensive quality of college students, such as innovation education and knowledge system education. Fourth, target-oriented cultivation. Target-oriented training is based on the survey results of schools or professional evaluation institutions, through the analysis of the talent market, to determine the type and quantity of talents needed, according to which the training objectives of majors and students are defined, comprehensive abilities and special skills are decomposed, teaching plans are formulated, teaching process and teaching activities are organized.

2. Research Methods

To cultivate the employment competitiveness of college students, they need to accumulate professional knowledge and experience in school study, and more importantly, they need to match the actual working ability of related jobs. Application-oriented undergraduate colleges and universities can promote college students to improve their own ability and realize their own value, meet the needs of employers, and optimize the allocation of social resources by constructing practice cultivation platforms and improving the integration of professional knowledge.

2.1. Improving Their Own Ability is the Premise of Cultivating College Students' Employment Competitiveness

The ultimate goal of the cultivation of college students' employment competitiveness is to make them adapt to the changes of employers, employment market and employment mode, and the premise of achieving this goal is to improve their own ability. Only by improving their own ability, mastering rich professional knowledge and continuously improving their comprehensive quality, can college students effectively carry out social practice. As early as

1996, the United States Department of Education and Science proposed that the "employability framework" of college students is composed of: learning technical ability, communication ability, problem solving ability, teamwork ability, innovation and entrepreneurship ability. The core competitiveness of college students' employment is built around "employability framework", and its "five dimensions" include five parts: excellent professional quality, continuous learning ability, outstanding innovation ability, rich practical experience and excellent vocational skills(Figure1).The core competitiveness of employment is a stable feature of sustainable development, which is not easy to be imitated by other competitors, and is a concentrated reflection of students' comprehensive strength.

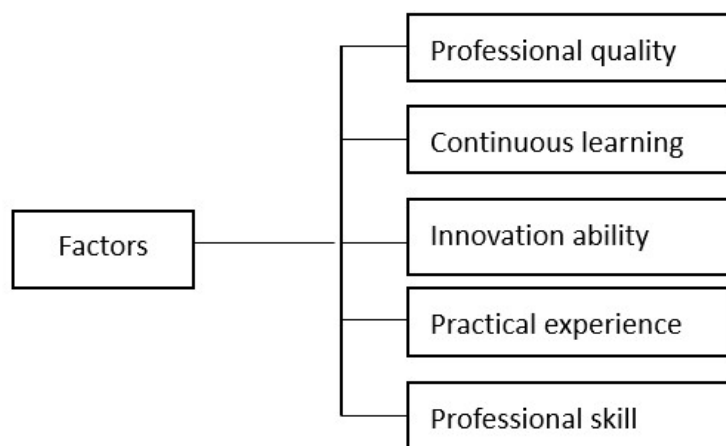


Figure1. Five dimensions

First, excellent professional quality: Professional quality can be quantified as "professional business", which reflects the individual's work attitude and psychological endurance at work. Excellent professional quality should include rational employment concept and good employment psychology, and good "vocational business" can promote the development of occupation. Excellent professional quality is mainly reflected in the positive employment psychology, hard-working spirit, dedicated work attitude and the collective consciousness of teamwork. The cultivation of professional quality in college mainly depends on the training guidance of the second class, which is a long-term accumulation process.

Second, continuous learning ability: Learning ability refers to the ability of college students to continuously acquire new knowledge, learn to find problems, analyze problems and use knowledge to solve practical problems in their studies and careers. Learning ability should include learning attitude and the ability to learn new knowledge, including intellectual and non-intellectual factors, which is the embodiment of the comprehensive quality of college students. Students with strong learning ability are more competitive in employment, and students who work hard and are willing to study are more long-term and stable, and are more popular with employers. Third, innovation ability. Innovation ability refers to the creative ability of applying cutting-edge knowledge and existing skills to produce new social or economic value, and is also an important embodiment of work ability improvement. Innovation ability will directly affect the competitiveness of enterprises, so the proportion of innovation ability of employers in the selection of suitable candidates is increasing.

Third, rich practical experience: Social practice is an important way for college students to combine theory with practice, and it is an important way to know and understand society. In the process of contact with the society, college students can find their interests and values, understand their actual needs, and clarify their strengths and weaknesses. Through the accumulation of practice, college students cultivate the ability of self-exploration, hands-on

practice and theory combined with practice, increase social experience and insight, and lay a good foundation for professional cognition.

Fourth, excellent vocational skills: vocational skills refer to the ability that an individual should have when engaged in a certain occupation. No matter what kind of occupation college graduates are engaged in, the vocational skills that constitute their core competitiveness in employment should include: organizational planning ability, vocational and technical ability and problem-solving ability. Vocational skills should be accumulated through the study of professional courses and career, which greatly affects the whole career development of college students.

2.2. Improving Practice Training Mode is an Effective Way to Improve Students' Professional Ability

At present, the domestic application-oriented undergraduate colleges and universities have initially formed a practical training mode of college students that conforms to the characteristics of relevant majors, but the practical education of many majors still has the problem of disconnection between professional knowledge and practical ability, and the practice training effect of some majors is not good: Some professional practice platform positioning is limited to improving students' practical cognition of a certain course of their major. After completing the course design on the practice platform, students only understand part of the knowledge and lack a holistic understanding of the work flow of related majors. In addition, due to the lack of practical experience and the lack of ability to convert knowledge into practice, when college students enter the unit for internship, the internship unit is difficult to let them complete the process work, which makes many internship units difficult to play a role in educating people. Therefore, it is of great significance to build a perfect practice training platform to expand college students' professional knowledge and improve their employment competitiveness. At present, application-oriented undergraduate universities play a leading role in the process of platform construction, taking on the platform selection, course arrangement, practice cycle, task and personnel division, etc., and even the later teaching effect evaluation and improvement measures are also set up by universities. This mode ignores the role of enterprises, students and local governments, and needs to be further improved.

First, tripartite collaboration to build a practice cultivation model. The development of practice cultivation mode is the premise of practice development. Since there are many factors affecting the improvement of college students' professional ability, relevant departments should carry out detailed planning and formulate feasible plans in the early stage of the development of practice cultivation mode. Specifically, three subjects should be considered in the development of practice cultivation model. One is the teaching unit. As the organizer and participant, the teaching unit should become the primary subject of the practice cultivation mode of college students. In the process of developing the practice cultivation model, the teaching unit designs reasonable cultivation contents for the college students based on their own knowledge, so that knowledge and practice can be effectively combined. Second, enterprises. Enterprises will put forward new requirements for college students' professional ability from their own perspective. If enterprises are involved, the development of college students' professional ability practice cultivation model will be more complete. The third is the government. Policy support and macro-control are very important components in the training of college students' employment core competitiveness. The government and education authorities should take the market demand as the guide, encourage universities to run schools with characteristics and connect with enterprises, give play to the advantages of school-enterprise cooperation, and formulate relevant supporting policies.

Second, demand-oriented, optimize the personnel training model. The purpose of constructing the practice platform of college students' ability expansion is to meet the diversified needs of

enterprises and improve the competitiveness of college students' employment. Therefore, while developing the practice cultivation model, it is also necessary to understand the employment needs of the industry and integrate this demand into the development of the practice cultivation model. Employers can participate in the reform of college curriculum and teaching programs to train high-quality talents who meet the requirements of The Times and social value orientation. Build an internship practice platform for college students, so that students can apply theoretical knowledge to practical operations through professional skills practice and employment practice, and improve hands-on practical ability. The combination of the university's talent training mode, the employer's requirements for talent ability and the efforts of college students through the platform can effectively improve the core competitiveness of college students' employment.

Third, deepen the reform of education and teaching to achieve all-round education.

Colleges and universities have many social functions such as scientific research, education and service, and personnel training is the essential function of colleges and universities. Colleges and universities should effectively promote the whole-staff and all-round education system, improve the employment guidance and service level of college students, and effectively help college students improve their employability and employment quality. Deepen teaching reform, embed the core competitiveness of college students in the reform of college curriculum system, strengthen extracurricular practice of professional courses and guidance on innovation and entrepreneurship, and improve students' vocational skills; Combine the second classroom education to do a good job in employment guidance and service, respect the personality characteristics and ability differences of different students, pay attention to the differences in talent training, and improve the competitiveness of college students in employment.

2.3. Promote the Integration of Students' Professional Knowledge, Focusing on the Cultivation of Innovation and Cooperation

Professional integration is not a simple knowledge integration, but for a certain aspect of a certain problem (or process), students from different professional backgrounds give full play to their respective expertise, so that the problem can be solved more smoothly, and the joint discussion in this process is conducive to improving the cooperation ability of college students. The integration of professional knowledge can be carried out around specific projects, including university teachers' projects, student competition projects and enterprise commissioned projects. The project of university teachers is based on scientific research, and the product is not very clear, and most of them focus on their own professional field, and their ability to absorb and integrate other professional knowledge is limited. Student projects mainly focus on competitions and science and technology projects, and students often lack initiative in cross-professional communication, which makes it difficult to form knowledge integration. The project entrusted by the enterprise is mainly practical application, the product is clear, and the skills in the field of production and flow are higher, involving a wide range of knowledge, both the professional field knowledge of the product, but also involving promotion, sales and other marketing knowledge, and the integration of professional knowledge is higher, so we should vigorously promote the enterprise project into the campus.

First, create an environment for the intervention of enterprise projects. As the base camp of college students' innovation, colleges and universities should continue to attract enterprise science and technology projects into colleges and universities through the policy of "introduction". For example, the method of signing contracts with enterprises stipulates that some scientific research projects are completed within a certain period of time and entrusted to teachers, who lead student teams to complete them. This not only increases the opportunities for students to innovate, but also improves the technological level of enterprises to achieve a win-win effect. For another example, colleges and universities can contact science and

technology parks in their regions, regularly organize enterprises in science and technology parks to establish project friendships with colleges and universities, and form cooperation platforms.

Second, create conditions for student project cooperation. At present, most of the scientific research and innovation projects of college students are self-selected topics, and most students form teams to declare projects based on their professional interests. This makes the project lack of other professional intervention, and the innovation effect is not good. Therefore, colleges and universities can arrange guiding and cross-specialty topic selection when publishing college students' scientific research innovation projects, so as to improve the possibility of students' cross-specialty scientific research cooperation. In addition, many colleges and universities have support projects for college students' scientific and technological innovation, and the relevant departments of colleges and universities should strengthen the release of this information on campus, so that students can grasp the latest regional scientific research projects.

Third, strengthen innovation management. Colleges and universities also need to strengthen their own innovation management, including innovation management, improve innovation incentive mechanism, improve the achievement transformation mechanism. In terms of innovation management mode, colleges and universities can set up innovation management departments to manage the cultivation of innovative talents and innovation results; Establish a tutor system to guide innovation, and improve the "teacher-undergraduate" student innovation cooperation mechanism. In terms of improving innovation incentive mechanism, universities can set up innovation funds, use part of financial funds to encourage teachers and students to innovate, and form a long-term and stable incentive system; Implement cultivation incentive measures, select innovation teams through a systematic selection mechanism, regularly conduct innovation training for key members within the group, and improve the scientific and technological content and social value of innovation achievements. In terms of improving the achievement transformation mechanism, colleges and universities can establish achievement transformation platforms on campus, or entrust third-party institutions (such as science and technology service social organizations) to transform some innovation achievements into practical applications; We will improve the mechanism for promoting achievements, and promote innovative achievements to other countries through information conferences and innovation competitions.

3. Conclusion

Improving the employment competitiveness of application-oriented undergraduate students is not a matter that can be achieved overnight, and requires the joint efforts of schools, enterprises, governments and students themselves. Schools should continue to deepen the reform of education and teaching, strengthen cooperation and exchanges with enterprises, and provide more practical opportunities and employment resources for students; Enterprises should actively participate in the process of talent training and provide students with internship opportunities and career development guidance; The government should increase the input and support to higher education to provide a strong guarantee for the development of colleges and universities. Students themselves should also actively improve their own quality and ability, and constantly adapt to the changes in market demand. Application-oriented undergraduate colleges and universities will play a more important role in cultivating high-quality talents. They should further enhance the employment competitiveness of students and train more outstanding talents for the society.

Acknowledgments

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