

# Reflections on the Discussion of Modern Social Problems in China

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**Abstract:** *With the development of the economy, a series of social problems in China have become increasingly prominent. In addition, the expansion of online and other emerging media on the topic of Austrian discourse has led to the emergence of some issues that have been ignored or blocked. There are generally some social problems in Chinese society, such as unemployment, widening wealth gap, imbalanced development, industry misconduct, poverty alleviation, social security and welfare issues, housing issues, and so on. These issues cover almost all aspects of society and involve all levels of society. In the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China, long-term wars caused serious damage to the national economy, resulting in economic depression, poverty, and widespread unemployment. With the acceleration of economic globalization, the emergence of unemployment is inevitable. In recent years, with the deepening of economic system reform, employment issues have increasingly attracted social attention, and academic research on the issue of unemployment in the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China has also achieved fruitful results. This article takes the issue of unemployment as an example to explore the current situation and solution strategies of unemployment in modern China.*

**Keywords:** *China; Modern times; Social problems*

## 1. Introduction

Looking around the world, young people are the main groups facing unemployment, and the youth unemployment rate in all countries is generally much higher than that of adults. In recent years, the problem of youth unemployment in China has begun to appear, and it has become the main target of employment and re-employment in China. The problem of employment and unemployment is not only an important economic indicator, but also a sensitive social problem. Employment and unemployment are two sides of the same coin, and difficult employment means high unemployment risk [1]. The population base is too large, the per capita resources are insufficient, and the labor force is relatively surplus, which is the basic situation in China at this stage. Employment is the biggest and most basic livelihood, and achieving full employment is one of the most important core objectives of macro policies in the world [2].

With the development of the economy, China's industrial structure is undergoing adjustment, and the employment structure is also changing accordingly. As the labor supply side reform and adjustment speed is relatively lagging behind, it is unable to adapt to the new changes in labor demand, which to a certain extent restricts the adjustment of the economic structure, and structural unemployment is prominent. Unemployment issues can easily lead to criminal behavior that forces individuals to take risks in their livelihoods, and can also bring psychological pressure to individuals, such as negative emotions such as dissatisfaction, complaints, and depression caused by workplace setbacks, which may accumulate a sense of social detachment, dissatisfaction with society and the government, and lead to collective action, causing social instability [3]. For contemporary China, which is undergoing economic transformation, the employment problem stems from the changes in the socio-economic structure on the one hand, and also affects the development of the social economy on the other hand. Every wave of unemployment means that a large number of workers cannot obtain living resources by selling their labor force, and once the core labor force in the family becomes unemployed, it means that the family will face a huge economic crisis and even poverty soon [4]. With the Economic restructuring and the change of labor market demand, the labor market has the contradiction of labor shortage and employment difficulty, the education content does not match the market demand, and college students find it difficult to find jobs. The structural unemployment problem is prominent. To some extent, an

appropriate unemployment rate is beneficial for improving the competitiveness of enterprises and promoting socio-economic growth, but an excessively high unemployment rate can bring about social instability. In recent years, great changes in science and technology are taking place around the world. Artificial intelligence has brought convenience and efficiency to production, work and life. At the same time, some jobs may be replaced by machines, resulting in the hidden danger of technological unemployment [5].

Since the 21st century, China has entered an aging society, with over 10% of the population aged 60 and above, and over 7% of the population aged 65 and above. At the same time, the proportion of middle-aged and elderly workers aged 40 and above in the working age population is increasing year by year. Middle and elderly workers are often at a disadvantage in the job market, with a higher risk of unemployment. China has a large long-term labor force base, and the employment pressure of newly growing labor has always been high. Since 1999, universities have expanded enrollment, resulting in a significant increase in the number of college graduates. The increasing pressure on non-agricultural employment has led to the collective employment difficulties faced by this generation [6]. Currently, China is in a period of industrial restructuring, and in order to better promote economic prosperity, maintain social stability, and reduce unemployment rate, it is urgent.

## 2. The Current Situation and Causes of Unemployment in China

### 2.1. The Current Situation of Unemployment in China

Unemployment refers to people within a certain age range who are willing to work but do not have a job and are looking for a job or have never found a job at all. After 1992, the number of registered urban unemployed people in China has been increasing year by year, and the registered urban unemployment rate has also been increasing accordingly. Especially from 2005 to 2006, there was a sharp increase in the number of unemployed people, and although there has been a decrease since then, the overall trend is still showing an upward trend, and the total amount of unemployment is still quite large. Due to the more sufficient social security for urban laborers, they can receive more assistance when facing unemployment, resulting in less employment pressure. However, rural laborers, due to the lack of unemployment protection, have to lower their job expectations and enter the labor market as soon as possible [7].

According to the survey, the majority of unemployed individuals have been unemployed for more than one year, with a proportion of 28.97% having been unemployed for more than three years. Unemployed individuals are highly likely to cause social problems such as poverty and illegal crime in a long-term state of unemployment, which is worth paying attention to, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of unemployment time

Unemployment time	Proportion
Less than a year	39.25%
More than 1 year but not more than 2 years	31.78%
More than 3 years but not more than 5 years	14.36%
More than 6years	14.61%

Meanwhile, the living conditions of the unemployed deserve attention. The living expenses of unemployed individuals mainly rely on family income, personal savings, temporary work income, and family and friend assistance, with a very low proportion relying on unemployment and social assistance, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of sources of living expenses for unemployed individuals

Source of living expenses	Proportion
Family income	51.37%
Personal savings	20.93%
Temporary worker income	13.78%
Relatives and friends assistance	8.34%
Social assistance	5.58%

### 2.2. Analysis of the Causes of Unemployment in China

The characteristic of unemployment in China is the excessive surplus of labor force, and the

imbalance between employment positions and labor force quantity. Some industries experience overproduction due to market changes and insufficient demand, resulting in some workers losing their jobs. The number of jobs that the country can provide to workers is far less than the actual demand, which will inevitably lead to labor surplus and unemployment. At present, China is in the stage of large-scale industrial structure adjustment. The agricultural sector, which was originally the main channel for absorbing new employment, has been largely excluding labor since the 1990s, and its ability to accept labor is constantly decreasing. The advancement of technology has greatly reduced the demand for labor, thereby exacerbating the layoff rate of employees. China's economic structure is in the transition period. When the knowledge and skill level of labor force cannot keep up with the requirements of Economic restructuring, a large number of labor force will begin to face unemployment [8].

In today's world, science and technology have undergone significant development, and intelligent devices are also ubiquitous. Workers are likely to be replaced by machines, and surplus workers are also likely to face re-employment. With the improvement of living standards and the popularization of education, people's expectations for employment are becoming higher and higher. Many unemployed people are unable to find employment for a long time due to their old mindset and unwillingness to work in flexible enterprises. When the size of the employment unit and income expectations are inconsistent with their own ideas, most people with high education will choose to become unemployed; And most people with low educational backgrounds do not meet the requirements of technology-based enterprises, resulting in increasingly severe unemployment.

### **3. Countermeasures to Solve the Problem of Unemployment in China**

#### ***3.1. Adjust Industrial Policies to Increase Job Opportunities***

Entrepreneurship can drive more people to find employment, and to a large extent, it can help a large portion of the unemployed find employment. Increase the adjustment of industrial policies, develop more labor-intensive industries, and encourage independent entrepreneurship to increase job opportunities for workers. The government should increase funding for independent entrepreneurship, in order to stimulate more people's entrepreneurial enthusiasm. Entrepreneurs can successfully start their own businesses, which not only solves their own economic problems and enhances their self-worth, but also provides more jobs for other unemployed individuals, thereby promoting economic development [9].

At present, China's economic structure is in a period of adjustment, and increasing the proportion of the tertiary industry in the national economy is also one of the goals. All industrial structures have their own characteristics, and different industrial structures will have different effects. If we can better guide its development, it will solve the problem of unemployment for a large part of the unemployed. The government should vigorously develop small and medium-sized enterprises, expand the overall economic scale and quality of the country, and accelerate industrial transformation. Policies should better guide the development of the private economy. The influx of surplus rural labor into cities has greatly increased the employment pressure in cities. Therefore, in order to better absorb rural surplus labor, it is necessary to accelerate the development of township enterprises.

#### ***3.2. Improve the Quality of Workers and Transform Employment Concepts***

With the rapid adjustment of economic structure and the increasing number of high-tech enterprises, the requirements for the quality of workers are also increasing. Many workers are forced to lose their jobs due to their inability to meet the technical and knowledge requirements of enterprises. This involuntary unemployment situation can be effectively reduced. From the current situation in China, there is a severe surplus of general labor force, while skilled labor force is still extremely scarce. This creates a situation where enterprises lack suitable labor, while more surplus labor cannot be employed. Economic development should also increase investment in education, and the level of education development should keep up with the level of economic development. So, this makes it necessary to increase the intensity of education and training, and cultivate professional and technical talents. Each job requires different work skills. Countries and enterprises should increase more skill training institutions to make the labor force better meet the requirements of employers and Economic restructuring after training [10].

Affected by the current enrollment system, both schools and parents only focus on understanding

and mastering theoretical knowledge for their children's education, completely neglecting the exercise of students' practical skills, which cannot meet the requirements of enterprises for employees. Naturally, they will face a large number of unemployment after graduation. In recent decades, China's economy has developed rapidly, and people's living conditions have also become better and better. Young people are generally pampered at home. Most people are unwilling to choose unstable small and medium-sized enterprises, while more job seekers hope to enter state-owned enterprises. But the demand of these enterprises and institutions is limited, and they are simply unable to provide more positions. It is necessary to strengthen the guidance of college students' employment concepts, transform their employment concepts, and ensure the full employment of college students. Based on the current economic environment, we will increase efforts to promote various concepts such as flexible employment, dynamic employment, and diversified employment, reduce information asymmetry, and provide job seekers with more thinking and choices. In China, schools at all levels should deeply promote employment education, effectively regard employment education and guidance as important content, guide them to establish a scientific outlook on employment, make students willing to intern and accumulate work experience, recognize their strengths and weaknesses, seize the golden period of job hunting and social opportunities, and leverage their strengths to find suitable positions.

#### 4. Conclusions

The situation of employment and unemployment is one of the important indicators for examining China's macroeconomic operation. Therefore, examining the attitude of Chinese residents towards employment and unemployment issues is largely related to social stability and the well-being of the people. Unemployment restricts economic development, affects residents' lives, and threatens social stability. Employment is the foundation of people's livelihoods, and achieving full employment is the key to creating a better life for all. The issue of unemployment is a very complex historical phenomenon and a global problem. On the one hand, unemployment is a result of the relative decrease in labor demand due to the development of productivity, and on the other hand, it is a requirement for the market to allocate resources. The government should combine its own characteristics and labor characteristics to open up employment channels, encourage independent entrepreneurship, provide necessary subsidies for self-employed workers, and promote the realization of a new situation where entrepreneurship drives employment. The government should not only focus on formulating policies to promote high-quality employment for young people, but also pay attention to timely grasping the employment mentality of young people and providing timely and effective guidance. Therefore, it is necessary to increase attention to employment issues and actively solve the problem of "difficult employment" from multiple perspectives, in order to promote the long-term and sustainable development of the Chinese economy.

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