

# Current Status and Future Trends of Research on the Value Orientation of College Students' Employment under the New Employment Form

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**Abstract:** *The new employment pattern and college students' employment problems have been the hotspots of theoretical research in the past two years. The research and limitations of the new employment pattern and employment value orientation at home and abroad are systematically sorted out and reviewed, and it is pointed out that in the future, it is necessary to closely combine the new employment pattern and employment value orientation of college students, correlating theoretical and empirical analysis in terms of endogenous dynamics, to better guide university students to develop a correct outlook on employment under the new employment pattern. Reorient college students towards cultivating a well-grounded perspective on employment and engaging in comprehensive theoretical exploration.*

**Keywords:** *New employment pattern; Employment value proposition; University student population*

## 1. Introduction

Employment is a major issue of concern to society as a whole. Employment value orientation is a series of values and value choices that affect employment behavior in the process of employment, and it is the life values embodied in the process of employment. Employment value orientation directly affects the actual employment choices and future development goals of college students and is the key to effectively understanding the employment trend of college students. Therefore, it has become an important task for colleges and universities to strengthen the leadership and cultivation of college students' employment value orientation and guide them to establish correct employment value orientation. According to the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, the number of college graduates in China will reach 11.58 million in 2023, a record high since 2022, when the number of college graduates exceeded 10 million. College students are the main participants of the youth group, as well as the main participants and builders of the new employment pattern. Therefore, in such a severe employment situation, it is crucial to guide college students in the new employment pattern to establish correct employment concepts<sup>[1,2]</sup>.

In summary, this paper takes the new employment pattern as the background, combs through the new employment pattern, the current situation of employment value orientation research, and the correlation between the two expands the new perspective of the new employment pattern and the research field of employment problems, and provides a positive theoretical reference for the practice of college students' employment value education.

## 2. Theoretical studies on new employment patterns

### 2.1. Research on the meaning of new employment patterns and related policies

The communique of the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 2015 and the Government's work report in 2016 both proposed to "strengthen support for flexible employment and new forms of employment", and for the first time, the concept of "new forms of employment" was introduced (referred to as "new forms of employment"). However, there is still a lack of a unified definition of this concept. The basic consensus is that new forms of employment are closely related to the rise of new technologies, the new economy, and new occupations, and to changes in the mode of production brought about by the development of information technology

and the popularization of the Internet and communications technology, as well as new types of labor relations such as de-employerization and multi-employerization. The representative figure of domestic research on new employment patterns is the scholar Zhang Chenggang, who has explored the concept of new employment patterns (2016), category characteristics (2018), and public policies (2019) in some depth. There is a gradual increase in the number of discourses studying the protection of workers' rights and interests, the identification of labor relations, and the mode of work of trade unions under the new employment pattern (Wang Juan, 2019; Wang Fuxi and Xi Yihang, 2020; Tang Jie and Zheng Qi, 2022), and the study of new occupations, which is closely related to the new employment pattern, has also been a hotspot of research in the past two years. In particular, after the State Ministry of Labor and Social Security revised and promulgated 29 new occupations mainly related to emerging industries, high-tech, and service industries in 2015. In 2019, the School of Labor and Human Resources of Renmin University of China put forward the Report on the Employment Ecosystem of Life Service Platforms and Meituan Dianping Employment Opportunities Measurement Report, which concluded that the typical new occupations related to life cover catering and takeaway, hotel and bed and breakfast, leisure and entertainment, Beauty, Medical and Beauty, Parenting, Marriage, Learning and Training, and Household, and other 26 new occupations in nine categories. 2020 Meituan-Dianping, in conjunction with Zhilian Recruitment, defined new occupations in the 2019 New Occupation Crowd Report on the Life Service Industry: new employment forms in the new business of China's life service industry.

## **2.2. Study on new employment patterns and employment issues**

The search terms "new employment pattern" including "employment" and "new business" and including "employment" were used. As of August 2023, there are 1,419 results in CNKI. While the subject terms "new business" and containing "employment choice"; "new business" and containing "employment choice characteristics" were searched, a total of 4 articles were found. There are 4 articles on market regulation and employment policy in the new industry, the latest of which is a study by Bao Qiwen and other scholars in December 2022 on the evolution of college students' outlook on employment in the context of the new industry. The existing studies are mainly centered on three main lines: first, the impact of the new industry on entrepreneurship. For example, the Employment Bureau of Neijiang City (2018) studied the challenges of unstable employment of entrepreneurial workers and difficulties in protecting their rights and interests brought about by the development of various new economies and new business models through talks and questionnaires. Second, the impact of new business forms on flexible employment. For example, Zhu Wanfen (2019), after sorting out related issues at home and abroad, concluded that there is a lack of quantitative analysis of flexible employment in new business forms. Third, the impact of the new industry on labor rights and interests. Represented by Tang Jie, Zheng Qi (2022), Lu Ming (2019), etc., it is believed that the employment groups in the new industry present many new characteristics, and it is necessary to change the meaning of the traditional labor relations, clarify the limitations of the relevant legal relations, and improve the legislation. This part of the literature summarizes the new problems brought about by new industries due to new features such as blurred work boundaries, and provides certain interpretations in terms of innovation, flexible employment, and labor rights and interests, respectively.

## **2.3. Research developments**

Regarding the development trend of new employment patterns, most scholars have a positive attitude towards them, believing that they have a promoting effect on employment and economic development. It is also recognized that with the generation of new technologies, some new occupations will gradually replace traditional occupations, which leads to the emergence of underemployment and unemployment (Cai Fang, 2021), and that the digital economy hurts traditional industries, such as manufacturing and mining, and a positive effect on the tertiary industry, which has a positive impact on employment as a whole (Ding Lin and Wang Huijuan, 2020).

Combined with the new industry the research on youth employment issues mainly reflects the following research trends: first, a macro analysis of the characteristics of new career youth. For example, Ren Fei (2019), Lian Si (2019), and Shen Qianfan et al. (2019) conducted a preliminary analysis of the characteristics of new occupational youth and changes, and the "Report on the Development of China's New Occupational Youth under New Employment Patterns", which was co-authored by the research team of the Think Tank for Globalization (CCG) and the Tencent Youth Development Committee in July 2023, also analyzes the current situation of the development of new

occupational youth in the form of new employment, the existing problems and the development needs<sup>[3,4]</sup>. Secondly, it focuses on the related research on the impact of endogenous motivation on new employment forms, such as activating and developing the path of employment for poor college students through enhancing endogenous motivation (Zhao Ming, Chen Xiaoman, 2023), and whether the employment mentality can be correctly put in the right place is related to whether college students can realize their employment or not (Xin Guolei, 2020; Zhao Jinmei, 2019) and other scholars as representatives<sup>[5]</sup>. Third, employment tendency and career cognition. Deeply influenced by the network, diversified development paths, and more biased towards materialism. It is represented by BING Hao et al. (2019), ZHANG Wenlong, YI Rudder Ye (2019), JIN Guang (2020), Jenny Hu (2018), REN Fei (2019) and LI Zhengrui (2019).

In summary, the research on youth employment in the new employment pattern is more extensive and diversified. For example, young workers in the new employment pattern are more educated, unique in the digital era, more willing to express their own will, and more diversified needs (Xu Baojun, 2021). The workplace of new employment forms is more dispersed, and the government should collaborate across regions and multiple sectors for dynamic management (Wu Qingjun, 2023; Liu Rong, 2023), and it should increase the support for the training of new vocational skills to reduce the risk of their unemployment (Xu Xinpeng, Yuan Wenquan, 2023), etc.

### **3. Theoretical studies on the value orientation of employment**

As of August 31, 2023, a total of 681 academic papers, including 30 master's and doctoral dissertations, have been obtained by searching on China Knowledge Network with the keyword of "employment value orientation". From the research trend in recent years, "employment value orientation" has become a research hotspot in recent years, and the related academic papers mainly discuss the connotation of employment value orientation, the status quo of employment value orientation, and the guiding strategy of employment value orientation. According to the combing of the research contents related to "employment value orientation", it is found that domestic and foreign scholars' research on employment value orientation mainly focuses on the following aspects:

#### ***3.1. Synthesis of studies on the characteristics of the value orientation of employment***

Many scholars in China have conducted in-depth discussions on the characteristics of the employment value orientation unfolding. For example, Shen Yanfei (2018) mentioned, "The employment value orientation of college students is gradually interested in national party and government organs, institutions, and state-owned enterprises as the first choice, and the awareness of college students' independent entrepreneurship is gradually increasing." Deng Peihua, Zhou Jianrong, Zhang Yongan, He Zhiyuan, and Wang Hua (2022) believe that "With the development of society and changes in the demand for talents in enterprises, many students take the national public recruitment examination, the specialization and postgraduate examination after graduation; the employment goal of college students has changed, and they hope to hone themselves and improve their abilities more through employment; most of the students of colleges and universities are employed in the big metropolis or first-tier cities and are not willing to be employed at the grassroots level. Cai Xiaoli, Koo Liangjun, and Cai Shu (2022) believe that "the proportion of higher education college students who continue to pursue higher education continues to increase, the proportion of employment in small, medium and micro-enterprises increases, the tendency of utilitarian employment value is highlighted, and the pathway of information networking is becoming more and more extensive."

In summary, the academic research on the "characteristics of employment value orientation" can be concluded that the employment value orientation of college students in the new era is characterized by interest, independent entrepreneurship, stabilization, utilitarianism, and so on, which provides a theoretical basis for us to study the "current situation of employment value orientation of college students".

#### ***3.2. A synthesis of research on the issue of value orientation in employment***

Domestic experts and scholars on the existence of problems research mainly focus on the following aspects. Ying Qianrui and Ga Zang Caidan (2020) believe that "the current employment value orientation of college students is characterized by unreasonable expectations of wages, a low level of awareness of innovation and entrepreneurship, the pursuit of peace and stability in choosing a career,

the difficulty of challenging the self, and the problem of bias and the phenomenon of following the trend in personal career planning." Deng Peihua, Zhou Jianrong, Zhang Yongan, He Zhiyuan and Wang Hua (2022) believe that "current college students have unclear employment goals, thin employment awareness, stereotypes, lack of the spirit of hard work, no clear career planning, excessive salary expectations, insufficient understanding of corporate culture, poor professional quality, and insufficient sense of social value." Su Jiawei (2017) believes that "under the new situation, the employment value orientation of college students is facing many problems, reflected in the 'iron rice bowl, high welfare' concept is stubborn, the lack of struggle, hard-working professional spirit, the existence of utilitarianism, and a weak sense of independent entrepreneurship." Yang Jimei (2016) pointed out that "the basic situation of the employment value orientation of contemporary college students in China is the conflict between career stability and the pursuit of interests, the interaction between blindly choosing a career and the wide range of channels for obtaining information, the blindness of rural development and urban development, and the hesitation between employment and entrepreneurship."

In summary, academic research concludes that college students in the new era prioritize interest, self-entrepreneurship, stability, and utilitarianism. This provides a theoretical basis for our study on the current state of college students' employment value orientation.

### ***3.3. A synthesis of research on the factors influencing value orientation in employment***

Academic research on analyzing the influencing factors of the employment value orientation of today's college students shows a diversified tendency, mostly from different disciplinary perspectives. For example, Guo Xin (2019) analyzed the generation mechanism of college students' employment values in-depth, and it pointed out that employment values are formed through the interaction of four elements: intrinsic needs, social cognition, self-consciousness, and individual experience. According to Ren Yixuan and Li Yi (2023), "The reasons for the negative employment value orientation of college students are that students do not have a clear understanding of their future development direction and the needs of enterprises, students lack confidence in their employability, students are more dependent on their family and relatives for moral and financial support and are influenced by their peers, and students have higher employment expectations and attach more importance to their salary and benefits, Stability, comfort and space for development, etc. The social environment has a greater impact on students' job-seeking choices, and many policies are not understood by students." Feng Zhi'en and Zhang Huilai (2016) believe that "under the influence of the logic of market economy behavior, the primary condition for college students to choose a job is salary, the social trend of modern personality emancipation, as well as the impact of pluralistic values, prompting the college students' view of choosing a job, the concept of employment presents irrational behavioral choices."

To summarize, the domestic research on the influencing factors of employment value orientation mainly focuses on the following two aspects: firstly, internal factors, i.e. from the perspective of the students themselves, which mainly include self-knowledge, personal ability, and so on. The second is external factors, which mainly include market economic conditions, multiple value impacts, personalized social trends, and so on.

### ***3.4. A review of studies on the path of employment value orientation guidance***

The employment value orientation guiding path is the key link to promote the course of political thinking, and the study of employment value orientation guiding path in colleges and universities can help to improve the effect and quality of the course of political thinking, so it has become a popular direction for experts and scholars to study. Experts and scholars have conducted in-depth discussions on the employment value orientation guidance path from different perspectives through a variety of investigation methods. Ying Qianrui and GaZang Caidan (2020) think: "To guide students to establish a correct value orientation, we must adhere to the guiding role of socialist core values and strengthen ideological and political education. Emphasize family education, improve the construction of school career choice information platform, and provide comprehensive professional guidance." . Su Jiawei (2017) believes that "it is necessary to cultivate students' diligence ability, abandon the concept of 'iron rice bowl and high welfare', cultivate students to form the correct three views, enhance the positive employment consciousness, cultivate students' ability to start their own business, and give full play to their value." According to Ren Yixuan and Li Yi (2023), "The countermeasures to guide the negative employment value orientation of college students include extensive experience, correcting students' employment cognition; precise strikes, enhancing students' employment ability; cooperation between

home and school, scientifically utilizing the resources of family and friends; positive guidance, reasonably setting employment expectations; multi-measures, broadening the channels of employment and job-seeking, and raising the importance of raising the publicity of the policy. "

To summarize, domestic experts and scholars have conducted in-depth research on the employment value orientation guidance path through different responsible subjects, focusing on the guidance of colleges and universities, family cultivation, teachers' inculcation, the spirit of the times, and government propaganda, which is of great significance in fostering a correct employment value orientation.

### ***3.5. A review of research on the value orientation of employment***

Foreign research on employment value orientation is earlier, characterized by a robust theoretical framework and a comprehensive structure. Although Chinese scholars entered this field relatively late, the analysis of existing research that "employment value orientation" has emerged as a prominent topic recently. It is considered a pivotal breakthrough for addressing employment challenges. The majority of literature has examined the aspects of employment value orientation, including its characteristics, problems, influencing factors, and guidance path. Previous studies have predominantly focused on the employment value orientation from the perspectives of universities, families, and society, while overlooking the influence of emerging forms of employment on college students' values. This indicates that its systematic and comprehensive needs to be further strengthened.

Through summarizing and concluding the research results of domestic scholars about employment value orientation, it is found that the domestic value orientation of college students' employment is broken down, mainly including five dimensions and seven dimensions. Five dimensions: "the comprehension of the current employment landscape", "the investigation of career orientation", "the selection of career strategies and channels", "the assessment of employment guidance efforts in colleges and universities", "the pursuit of ethical careers." Seven dimensions: "graduation destination choice", "career region choice", "value orientation", "career choice", "graduates' evaluation of good jobs", "the problem of resume fraud and the evaluation of academic performance and ability" and other aspects of the measurement, the underlying features of college students' employment values are unveiled.

In summary, the domestic research on employment value orientation and the construction of related measurement indexes lay the theoretical and practical foundation for future research. Although the academic community has not yet established an authoritative and recognized measurement system, in general, the existing studies are basically on the measurement of attitudes and awareness about college students' attitudes towards employment orientation, so the research scale should be selected and improved according to the characteristics of the samples themselves. The relevant research should take college students as the research object, revise based on the research of relevant experts and scholars, and design a general index system applicable to the employment value orientation of college students.

## **4. Future research directions**

### ***4.1. Theoretically different perspectives are explored in depth***

Different theoretical perspectives can be used for in-depth analysis in the future. For example, social identity theory and value clarification theory can be borrowed to study the characteristics and dilemmas of the employment choices of college student groups under the new employment pattern. The core idea of social identity theory put forward by British social psychologists is that social identity mainly comes from group membership or qualification, and people strive to pursue or maintain a positive social identity as a way to enhance their self-esteem. The characteristics and dilemmas of the group are analyzed from the three cognitive dimensions of identity, classification, and comparison in social identity theory, and the three-stage theoretical model of "choice-appreciation-action" advocated by the value clarification theory assists in analyzing and determining employment values. The combined application of the above two theories can further enrich and improve the theoretical study of college students' employment problems.

### ***4.2. Empirical analysis of emerging issues in new industries***

Since new businesses and occupations are new situations and new economic forms that have



emerged in recent years, the development of national standards for qualification assessment and certification of occupations has lagged behind the development of society. Therefore, although the number of literature studies on new employment forms is currently increasing, empirical studies are still very scarce. Although a few scholars have begun tracking research on groups such as online car drivers, more research papers have discussed the issue in terms of the impact of the industry, the impact on labor relations, and so on. Although Meituan Dianping and Zhilian Recruitment have explored the reasons for the emergence of new occupations, as well as the characteristics of youth groups and career development paths, they have focused more on research on the current status of occupations.

Economic development requires employment support. The Circular on the 14th Five-Year Plan for Employment Promotion mentions that achieving fuller and higher-quality employment is an intrinsic requirement for promoting high-quality development and building a modern socialist country in an all-round way. In particular, with the continuous development of new employment forms under digital transformation, the social environment and social needs are changing rapidly. As the main new force in the new employment pattern, the empirical research on the endogenous motivation and tendency of college students' employment can not only provide a reference for the employment market to analyze the direction and future of China's vocational system innovation and development but also provide decision-making basis for high-quality relief of the employment dilemma and the introduction of policies related to the cultivation of young talents, which is of great practical significance.

Therefore, it is an important theoretical and practical issue to promote employment and stability to conduct an empirical analysis of the new situation and problems of college students' employment under the new employment pattern, to better explore how to better mobilize the endogenous enthusiasm of the college student group in the process of promoting the modernization of the national governance system.

## 5. Conclusions

Revolving around the emergence of new employment forms, the present analyzes domestic and foreign research on the "new employment form" and "employment value orientation", aiming to explore their interrelationship. The two issues need to be closely combined in the future, as the employment of college students is examined within the framework of the new employment paradigm, considering endogenous power. To promote the modernization of the national governance system, harness the intrinsic motivation of college students, and address employment promotion and stability concerns.

## Acknowledgement

Liaoning Provincial Social Science Key Project "Research on the Characteristics of Employment Choices, Dilemmas and Coping Strategies of University Student Groups under New Employment Patterns" (Project No. L23ASH001)

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