

The Influence of Organizational Work Experience on the Employability of College Graduates in Beijing

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Abstract: Enterprises and student organizations are important ways for college students to enhance their professional skills and improve their self-competence. With the number of fresh graduates from colleges and universities increasing year by year, the job market is facing the pressure of imbalance between supply and demand of talents, and it has become crucial to enhance the employability and competitiveness of college graduates. Based on the questionnaire data of 210 fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing, exploring the impact of organizational work experience on the employability of recent college graduates in terms of the number and length of internships, the number and length of participation in student organizations, the results indicate that organizational work experience can significantly contribute to the employability of college students. Based on the results of the study, this paper proposes suggestions from the dimensions of universities and students in order to encourage college students to actively engage in organizational work and thus improve their employability.

1. Introduction

Employment is the most basic people's livelihood, and the effectiveness of employment work is also an important criterion to test the quality of talent cultivation in colleges and universities, which is related to the development of the school and social reputation, as well as the graduates' personal future, family happiness, and the development of the country[1]. With the development of higher education and the expansion of colleges and universities year by year, China's college graduates are increasing year by year, and college graduates reached 11.87 million in 2024, but the employment rate is only 55.5%, and the employment problem is becoming more and more prominent. According to the data of Beijing College Graduates' Employment and Entrepreneurship Service Platform, the recruitment demand of the job market in the graduation season showed a year-on-year decline, reflecting the real dilemmas of further narrowing of the job market demand, and increasing difficulty and pressure of employment of college graduates. At the same time, the higher willingness of college

graduates from other provinces to seek employment in Beijing has intensified the competition for and pressure on the employment of college graduates in the Beijing area[2]. In order to meet this challenge, China has deployed a number of measures to improve the employability and competitiveness of graduates, such as the “Employment and Entrepreneurship Promotion Action for the 2024 National College Graduates”, to ensure that fresh graduates are fully employed and realize high-quality employment.

The employability of fresh graduates from colleges and universities is closely related to general ability, self-management ability and specialized knowledge and skills. The first classroom of colleges and universities is the main position for cultivating college students' employability and competitiveness in employment, however, within the teaching activities (i.e., the first classroom) stipulated in the school teaching plan, it is not possible to fully exercise employability, and it is necessary to organize and guide students to carry out various meaningful after-class activities with the help of the second classroom of colleges and universities [3], which is very useful for expanding students' horizons and abilities, enriching students' social experience and enriching students' life.

Similarly, externship is a practical activity in which college students go to enterprises, institutions, government and other social organizations to work for the purpose of enhancing their employability [4]. To a certain extent, it alleviates the difficulties of college students' lack of practical experience and the mismatch between work ability and employers' demand, and studies have shown that off-campus internships can enhance college students' key employability skills, including communication and expression, teamwork, problem solving, and organizational coordination, etc., and it can help college students to clarify the direction of their own career development [5]. Therefore, experiences including work in university clubs and organizations of enterprises and institutions have an important impact on the comprehensive quality development and employability improvement of university students.

Colleges and universities should pay sustained attention to the influence of organizational work experience on college students' employability, and give full play to the synergistic effect of both on- and off-campus organizational work experience. At the same time, colleges and universities should pay more attention to multi-dimensional improvement of students' comprehensive quality and effectively enhance the employability and competitiveness of fresh graduates.

To sum up, this paper takes 2024 fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing as the research object to explore the influence of organizational work experience on their employability. Meanwhile, the findings of the study provide theoretical basis and practical support for colleges and universities in Beijing to effectively cultivate and enhance the employability of fresh graduates.

2. Research hypothesis and theoretical model

Organizational work experience includes personal experience in various student organizations such as serving on class committees or student councils, practicing in professional associations, participating in campus clubs, and working as an intern in social organizations such as enterprises and institutions. Fei Zhou [6] concluded that organizational work experience has a facilitating effect on students' extended cognitive ability, social skills development and basic cognitive ability. College students with higher extended cognitive abilities and better social skills development are better matched to suitable jobs, and student organizational work experience can enhance students' personal abilities and thus affect their satisfaction with their first jobs. Specifically, in terms of class committee and student government service experience, Sheng Cui and Qiuxiang Wu [7] argue that having student cadre experience has a significant impact on the enhancement of salary and benefits, and that student

cadre experience can act as a signal to judge students' teamwork ability, organizational ability, and can be easily identified in the job market. In terms of practical experiences in professional associations, Wenjun Lin [8] believes that practical activities linked to professional interests, career experiences based on one's own career planning, part-time jobs to increase insights or broaden horizons, and volunteer activities can transform professional knowledge into college students' employability. In terms of campus club participation experience, Yuting Sun [9] and others found that graduates who served as club officers had a large portion of their starting salary premium due to the fact that their club officer experience enhanced their level of human capital. In terms of internship work experience, Bennett Dawn [10] and others argued that students who have internship experience during their study are more confident in their employability structure than those who do not have internship experience, while at the same time, internship work experience and professional course work can be integrated with each other to help college students to fully develop their general skills, professional skills, and self-management skills. Based on the above analysis, the following hypotheses are proposed in this paper:

H1: Organizational work experience positively affects the employability of fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing.

H1a: Organizational work experience positively affects the general ability of fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing.

H1b: Organizational work experience positively influences the professional ability of fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing.

H1c: Organizational work experience positively affects self-management ability of fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing.

The research model in this paper is shown in Figure 1:

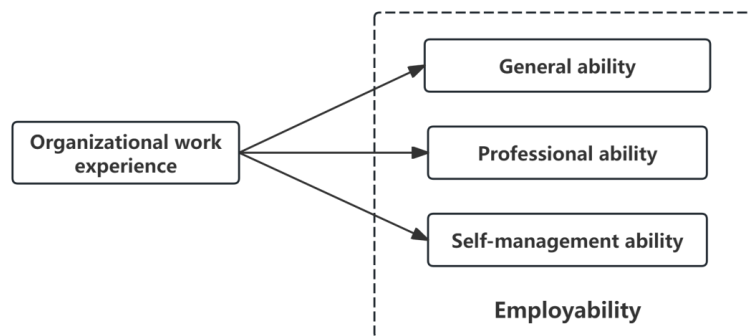


Figure 1: Research model.

3. Research Subjects and Data Collection

3.1. Overview of Fresh Graduates from Colleges and Universities in Beijing

Fresh graduates of colleges and universities refer to students of colleges and universities who are enrolled in state-recognized colleges and universities and obtain a graduation certificate within that year [11], including fresh graduates of adult college entrance exams as well as fresh graduates of general colleges and universities. There are a total of 92 colleges and universities in the Beijing region, including 67 undergraduate colleges and universities and 25 colleges and universities of specialization. In 2023, the number of college graduates in Beijing reached 285,000, an increase of 17,000 year-on-year, and the pressure of competition for employment is high.

3.2. Data collection and sample distribution

3.2.1. Data collection

In this paper, fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing were selected as the research object, and online and offline data collection was carried out in the form of questionnaire survey. The data collection time is from February to March 2023, and a total of 217 questionnaires were recovered, of which 210 were valid questionnaires, with an effective rate of 96.77%.

The questionnaire consists of three main sections, covering measurement items such as basic personal information, organizational work experience, and evaluation of employability. The first part is the basic personal information, including gender, professional category, and monthly household income (after tax); The second part is the organizational work experience, and the questionnaire items refer to the Survey of Students' Learning Engagement China (NSSE-CHINA), and the Questionnaire on the Degree of Involvement in Associations [12]. Organizational experience was divided into internship work and student organization experience, including question items such as the number and duration of participation in each type of organization; The third part is the self-assessment of employability, and the questionnaire items refer to the questionnaire on college students' employability and its enhancement [13]. The employability ability is divided into three core indicators: general ability, professional ability, and self-management ability. In addition, all attitudinal questions in the questionnaire were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 for “completely disagree” “somewhat disagree” “generally agree” “somewhat agree” and “strongly agree,” respectively. The sample distribution is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample distribution.

Statistical categories	Norm	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	88	58.10
	Female	122	41.90
Professional category	Humanities and Social Sciences	164	78.10
	Science, Technology, Agriculture and Medicine	44	21.00
	Arts and Sports	2	1.00
Place of origin	Beijing Urban	68	32.40
	Beijing Rural	32	15.20
	Cities outside Beijing	46	21.90
	Rural areas outside Beijing	64	30.50
Political profile	The masses	18	8.60
	Communist Youth League member	128	61.00
	Reserve member of Communist Party of China	24	11.40
	Communist Party member	40	19.00
Monthly family income (after tax)	Less than 1,000 RMB	2	1.00
	1001-2000 RMB	14	6.70
	2001-3000 RMB	28	13.30
	3001-4000 RMB	36	17.10
	4001-5000 RMB	38	18.10
	Above 5001 RMB	92	43.80

3.2.2. Reliability and validity analysis

In order to guarantee that the results of the questionnaire are real and reliable, it is necessary to analyze the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, and the results show that the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire of employability and its three dimensions is greater than 0.8, indicating that the reliability of the scales is high; at the same time, the KMO value of the above scales is greater than 0.8, and the significance of the Bartlett's Spherical Test is less than 0.05, indicating that the validity of the three scales is good. This indicates that the questionnaire results can be used for subsequent data analysis. The specific results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Reliability and validity analysis.

Variable scale	Reliability test		Validity test	
	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	Fold-half coefficient	KMO value	Bartlett 's spherical test (p value)
General ability	0.915	0.915	0.923	0.000
Professional ability	0.865	0.802	0.849	0.000
Self-management ability	0.847	0.865	0.872	0.000
Employability	0.950	0.928	0.906	0.000

4. Empirical analysis

4.1. Relevance analysis

In this paper, using SPSS26.0 software, fresh graduates' participation in organizational work was measured by internship work and the number and length of student organizational work, and employability was classified into general, professional, and self-management abilities for correlation analysis. Table 3 shows that the number and duration of organizational work are significantly and positively correlated with the employability of fresh graduates.

Table 3: Relevance analysis.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Number of internships	1						
2 Duration of internship	0.671**	1					
3 Number of participating student organizations	0.123	0.180	1				
4 Duration of participation in learning organizations	-0.036	0.041	0.325**	1			
5 General ability	0.400**	0.449**	0.331**	0.293**	1		
6 Professional ability	0.342**	0.413**	0.463**	0.334**	0.635**	1	
7 Self-management ability	0.297**	0.360**	0.514**	0.205*	0.455**	0.609**	1

Note: ** indicates significant at the 0.01 level and * indicates significant at the 0.05 level.

4.2. Regression analysis

The regression model was established by taking gender, place of origin, political profile, professional category, and monthly family income (after tax) as control variables, the number and length of internship work, and the number and length of participation in student organizations as independent variables, and the employability with each of its three dimensions as dependent variables. The results of Model 1 in Table 4 show that the length of internship ($\beta=0.165$, $p<0.001$), the number of participating student organizations ($\beta=0.154$, $p<0.001$), and the length of internship ($\beta=0.083$, $p<0.001$) can significantly and positively affect the employability, and that the internship length promotes the greatest positive influence effect on the employability of fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing.

The employability competencies were further subdivided into three dimensions for regression: generic ability, professional ability and self-management ability. The results of Model 2 showed that the length of internship ($\beta=0.167$, $p<0.05$) and the length of involvement in student organizations ($\beta=0.099$, $p<0.001$) could significantly and positively affect the generic ability. The results of model 3 showed that the length of internship ($\beta=0.205$, $p<0.05$), the number of participation in student organizations ($\beta=0.227$, $p<0.001$), and the length of time ($\beta=0.116$, $p<0.001$) were able to significantly and positively influence professional ability. The results of model 4 showed that both the length of internship ($\beta=0.133$, $p<0.1$) and the number of student organizations participated in ($\beta=0.278$, $p<0.001$) were able to significantly and positively influence self-management ability. In summary, organizational work experience can significantly promote the employability of fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing, and Hypothesis 1 is verified.

Table 4: Regression analysis.

Variable	Employability	General ability	Professional ability	Self-management ability
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Number of internships	0.122 (0.092)	0.131 (0.111)	0.165 (0.142)	0.070 (0.129)
Duration of internship	0.165*** (0.053)	0.167** (0.064)	0.205** (0.083)	0.133* (0.075)
Number of participating student organizations	0.154*** (0.04)	0.073 (0.048)	0.227*** (0.062)	0.278*** (0.056)
Duration of participation in learning organizations	0.083*** (0.028)	0.099*** (0.034)	0.116*** (0.044)	0.025 (0.039)
Gender	0.080 (0.087)	-0.011 (0.105)	0.148 (0.135)	0.224* (0.122)
Place of origin	-0.034 (0.037)	-0.056 (0.044)	0.047 (0.057)	-0.044 (0.052)
Professional category	-0.109 (0.098)	-0.090 (0.118)	-0.256 (0.152)	-0.045 (0.137)
Monthly family income (after tax)	0.028 (0.032)	0.017 (0.039)	0.026 (0.050)	0.054 (0.045)
Political profile	0.147*** (0.049)	0.181*** (0.059)	0.091 (0.076)	0.113 (0.069)
F	11.671***	7.154***	7.492***	7.169***
Adj.R ²	0.480	0.347	0.360	0.348

Note: *, **, and *** indicate significant at the 0.1, 0.05, and 0.01 levels, respectively; values in parentheses are standard errors.

5. Countermeasures and suggestions

5.1. Building an all-round student organization development system to empower college graduates' competitiveness in the workplace

Student organizations in colleges and universities have the role of social adaptation training for college students and can provide long-term education, organization and service functions for students [14]. Colleges and universities should grasp the willingness and enthusiasm of college students to actively participate in student organizations, strengthen the construction and management of student organizations, and provide a good platform for self-improvement and development for college students.

First of all, student organizations should be given sufficient support and resources, and guidance and assistance in the development process should be strengthened. Colleges and universities should provide student organizations with the necessary venues, equipment, funds and other support, cultivate students' organizational and management skills, and enhance their comprehensive quality and future employability. At the same time, the content of career planning education should be added to the training of student organizations to help students understand career development paths and the job market, and to help them better plan their career development [15].

Secondly, improve the management system of student organizations, encourage self-management of student organizations, and strengthen the communication and cooperation between student organizations. Colleges and universities should encourage students to manage student organizations independently, give full play to the enthusiasm of college students to participate in and manage student organizations, and solve the problems and difficulties in the development of student organizations in a timely manner [16]. Colleges and universities should also promote the contribution of resources and exchange of experience among different associations to enhance the influence, appeal and cohesion of student organizations.

Finally, the quality of student organizations' activities should be strengthened, and the connection between student organizations and society should be enhanced. Colleges and universities should actively establish partnerships with enterprises, governments and social groups, etc., and make use of the platform of school-enterprise cooperation to jointly carry out social practice activities and provide student organizations with practice bases and opportunities for project cooperation.

5.2. Encourage students to participate in organizational practices independently to deepen the accumulation of vocational skills and experience

The intrinsic needs of students to participate in organizational work are blended with organizational behaviors and value orientations, which are internalized into their own perceptions and experiences in the process of exploring interactions with the external community through student organizations, adding value to the meaning of the values [6]. It not only enhances the comprehensive qualities of fresh graduates such as communication and coordination and teamwork, but also lays a solid foundation for future career development. At the same time, it helps students to adapt to the rhythm of the workplace in advance, grasp the balance between organizational work and studies, and learn to regulate their mindset, so as to avoid being helpless in the face of work anxiety and excessive pressure in the workplace.

6. Conclusions and Outlook

6.1. Conclusions

The overall employability of fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing is at a moderately high level, and organizational work experience has a positive impact on the employability of fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing. Through regression analysis, this paper finds that organizational work experience has a positive influence on the employability of fresh graduates from colleges and universities in Beijing, as well as its sub-dimensions of general ability, professional ability and self-management ability. Among them, the number of participation in student organizations has the most significant positive effect on employability, the length of participation in student organizations has the most significant positive effect on general ability, and the number of participation in student organizations has the most significant positive effect on professional ability and self-management ability.

6.2. Research Outlook

This study used a questionnaire survey to analyze the current situation of organizational work experience and employability of 210 fresh graduates from universities in Beijing, and there are limitations in the selection of regions, so the sample will be expanded to enhance the representativeness of the sample to further test the reliability of the research findings. In addition, considering the rich meaning of employability, sub-dimensions of employability will be added in the future to adequately measure the employability of fresh graduates; finally, a follow-up survey will be conducted on some of the fresh graduates to further validate the effect of organizational work experience on the career development of fresh graduates.

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