

Original Paper

Research on the Employment Competitiveness of Students in Independent College from the Perspective of Transformation

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Abstract

Students in independent colleges are facing fierce competition in employment. The transformation and development bring both great opportunities and new challenges. Based on the objective understanding of the present situation of students' employment in independent college, the paper interprets multi-dimensionally the connotation of students' employment competitiveness, using the EFE Matrix on the evaluation of the independent college students' employment environment, and the SWOT Matrix on the analysis of advantages and disadvantages of the independent college students' employment competition, putting forward dynamic ways of effective enhancement of the independent college students' employment competitiveness under the viewpoint of transformation, moreover, promoting independent college students' employment in light of the new situation.

Keywords

independent college, employment status, employment competitiveness, external environment, advantages and disadvantages

1. The Current Situation and Enlightenment of the Transformation and Development of Independent Colleges

In February 2008, the Ministry of Education issued Order No. 26, and the independent college entered a five-year transition period, which opened the prelude of transformation and development. In June 2013, the Ministry of education guided the establishment of the "Application Technology University (College) alliance" to guide a number of undergraduate colleges to build application-oriented universities, and the transformation and development of independent colleges also entered a new stage. In May 2014, the Decision of the State Council on Accelerating the Development of Modern Vocational Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Decision") was issued. The Decision pointed out: "to guide a

number of ordinary undergraduate colleges and universities to transform into applied technology type colleges and universities, and focus on undergraduate vocational education. When an independent college is transferred to an independent institution of higher learning, it is encouraged to position itself as an applied technology type institution of higher learning.” In November 2015, the Ministry of Education, the National Development and Reform Commission and the Ministry of Finance jointly issued the guiding opinions on “guiding some local ordinary undergraduate universities to transform into application-oriented universities (GF [2015] No.7) to support local governments in formulating laws and regulations and supporting policies related to school enterprise cooperation, to support Pilot Universities in line with industrial planning, high employment quality and strong contribution to expand enrollment of majors; to support Pilot Universities in carrying out cooperation with similar foreign universities in running schools, in combination with major national strategic projects in education assistance, foreign investment and other fields, to go global in running schools”. Until December 2018, more than 50 independent colleges have been set up as independent private undergraduate schools. The number of independent colleges has decreased from more than 320 at the most to 265, but the number of students on campus still exceeds 2.5 million, and the number of graduates is nearly 600000.

Whether a large number of graduates can get their own place in the fierce employment market has not only become a key indicator to measure the quality of talent training in independent colleges, but also a major issue related to the survival and development of independent colleges. Under the background of the transformation and development of independent colleges and the construction of Application-oriented Universities (colleges), only by grasping the core issue of employment competitiveness, seriously clarifying the connotation of the employment competitiveness of independent college students under the current situation, according to the advantages and disadvantages of independent college students, and establishing effective ways to enhance the employment competitiveness, can we fundamentally promote College students entering independent colleges get employment smoothly, and promote the stable development of independent colleges.

2. An Objective Understanding of the Employment Status of College Students in Independent Colleges

Since 2013, “the most difficult season for employment” has been staged continuously. According to the statistics of the Ministry of education, in 2014, the number of college graduates (including graduate students, excluding adult education and self-taught students) was about 7.13 million, breaking through 7 million for the first time; in 2015, the number reached 7.36 million, and in 2018, it exceeded 7.5 million, setting a new record. Social voices generally believe that employment will become more difficult. However, in sharp contrast to the voice of singing failure, the data six months after graduation from the blue book published by Mycos is shown in Table 1 (the statistics of Mycos do not include the number of undergraduates at home and abroad and the number of college students at home and abroad)

the data shows that the employment rate of college students has kept rising steadily since the financial crisis in 2008, and there is no saying that “one year is more difficult than one year”. Of course, due to the substantial increase in the absolute number of graduates, even if the employment rate increases, the absolute number of unemployed will still increase.

Table 1. Employment Rate Data of Graduates after Half a Year

class	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class
	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Rate of employment	92.6%	91.4%	90.9%	90.2%	89.6%	86.6%	85.5%	87.5%

At the same time, the research group investigated the employment data of graduates from independent colleges. The researchers selected 15 independent colleges from all regions of the country, covering the characteristics of different disciplines such as industry, agriculture, science, literature, law, etc., which are not only sponsored by 985 universities and 211 Universities under the Ministry, but also by local universities. According to the online data of China Independent College, the five-year employment rate of 15 independent colleges is as follows: Great Wall College of China University of Geosciences 85%, seaside College of Beijing Jiaotong University 90%, Light Industry College of North China University of technology 95%, Jinqiao College of Kunming University of technology 96.5%, Urban College of Xi'an Jiaotong University 95%, South College of Zhongshan University 94%, North Information Engineering of Xi'an University of Technology College 85%, Century College of Beijing University of Posts and telecommunications 98.29%, Renji College of Wenzhou Medical University 95%, Kangda College of Nanjing Medical University 99%, Oriental College of Fujian agricultural and Forestry University 93%, Wuhan Media College of central China Normal University 90%, Mianyang Art College of Sichuan Conservatory 90%, Jingjiang College of Jiangsu University 95%, Chengxian College of Southeast University 95%.

It can be seen that: (1) With the growth of the absolute number of college students in independent colleges, employment pressure does exist, and there are a certain number of “unemployed” people every year; (2) With the data of Mycos as a reference, the employment situation of graduates in independent colleges is better, but the employment difficulty of graduates in independent colleges is not prominent; (3) The employment situation of independent colleges with obvious professional characteristics Affected by the development of its major in the social and economic structure, it is possible that the employment situation is very good or relatively weak; (4) Regional differences have a certain impact on the employment of independent colleges; (5) The development trend of social economy has a certain impact on the employment of college students.

3. The Connotation System of the Employment Competitiveness of Independent College Students

As early as the beginning of the 20th century, Mr. Huang Yanpei, the pioneer of education, pointed out: “what kind of methods are used to teach them (students) to develop various qualifications in the professional world? After learning, how can we make them have a good way out?”.

The so-called “various qualifications of the profession” is a simple and vivid summary of the employment competitiveness of college students. At present, there is no unified understanding about the employment competitiveness in the academic circles at home and abroad. There are several representative viewpoints: (1) the theory of ability. In the 1950s, British scholars put forward the concept of employment ability. Euverton, van der Hayden, Fugate and other European and American scholars have done a lot of research, especially including social capital into the ability system, which has expanded new dimensions of employability. According to domestic scholars, “employability refers to the ability to realize employment ideal, meet social needs and realize their own value in social life acquired by university graduates through knowledge learning and comprehensive quality development in school”, which is relatively weak. (2) factor theory: according to foreign scholar hillage & Pollard, employability includes various elements: the stock of capital such as knowledge, skills and attitudes, the methods of using and deploying these capital, the ability of displaying capital to potential employers, the operation space of individuals, such as labor market, personal environment, etc. (3) core theory. Domestic scholars Shi Wei and Zhang Su emphasize the concept of employment core competitiveness. They believe that employment core competitiveness plays a leading role in the ability system of college students and enables college students to compete in the employment market. It is a kind of unique comprehensive ability which is not easy to be imitated and can achieve competitive advantage and sustainable development. Generally speaking, although these studies have made important exploration and development of the connotation of the competitiveness of employment from various perspectives, they are all limited to the perspective of research and biased in the aspects of systematization, hierarchy and integrity.

Combining the previous theoretical research and practical understanding of employment guidance, this paper holds that the connotation of College Students’ employment competitiveness is a systematic system. First of all, in terms of its nature, the employment competitiveness of college students is a dynamic system, as shown in Figure 1. On the one hand, the employment subject (college students) and the external environment are always dynamically related, and the employment competitiveness changes dynamically under the interaction of the two; on the other hand, the internal knowledge, skills, psychological state and background conditions of the employment subject (college students) form an organic system, which comprehensively forms a kind of competitiveness compared with other employees. Secondly, from the perspective of evaluation, the employment competitiveness of college students is a multi-dimensional object, as shown in Figure 2. When the employment subject (college students) is the passive evaluation object, the employment competitiveness is mainly measured by some inherent static factors; otherwise, when the employment subject (college students) is the active

evaluation subject, the employment competitiveness is mainly evaluated by some variable dynamic factors. Finally, in terms of the complexity of its composition, the competitiveness of employment includes many levels and components, from preconditions to evaluative conditions, from basic conditions to key conditions, from quantifiable indicators to non quantifiable factors, as shown in Figure 3. To sum up, the employment competitiveness of college students is a systematic, multi-dimensional and hierarchical connotation system, which includes the innate conditions, internal characteristics, knowledge and skills level, moral and psychological quality, emotion and tendentiousness of the main body of employment. It has a dual evaluation dimension of subject and object, and always keeps interaction with the external environment, with its function. Utility is also in dynamic change.

As a new mode of higher education, the connotation system of the employment competitiveness of independent college students is the same as that of college students in essence. It should be noted that the independent college has its own distinct characteristics in school running level and thinking, student source and quality, training mode and goal, etc. Therefore, we must fully consider the social environment's acceptance of the independent college students as a new type of employment subject, firmly grasp the internal and external characteristics of the specific object of the independent college students, so as to accurately interpret the independent college students. The characteristics of College Students' employment competitiveness can effectively control their development and change.

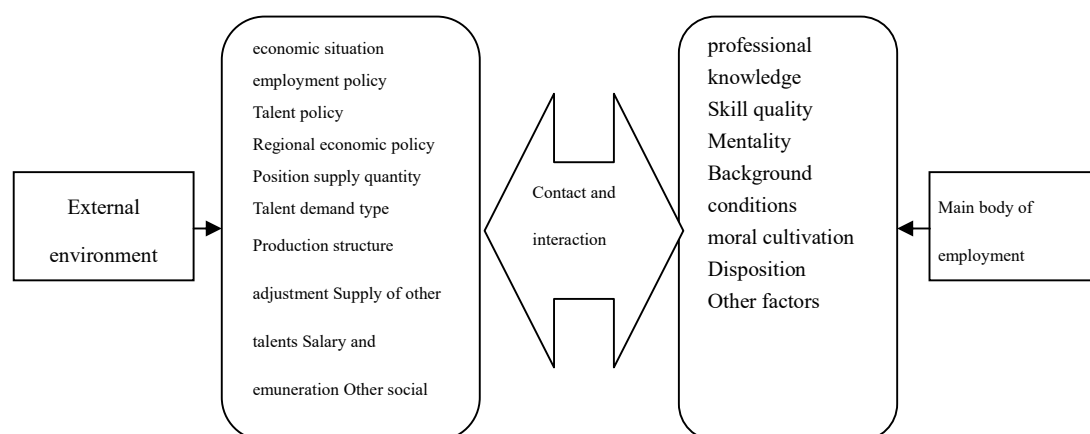


Figure 1. System of Employment Competitiveness of College Students

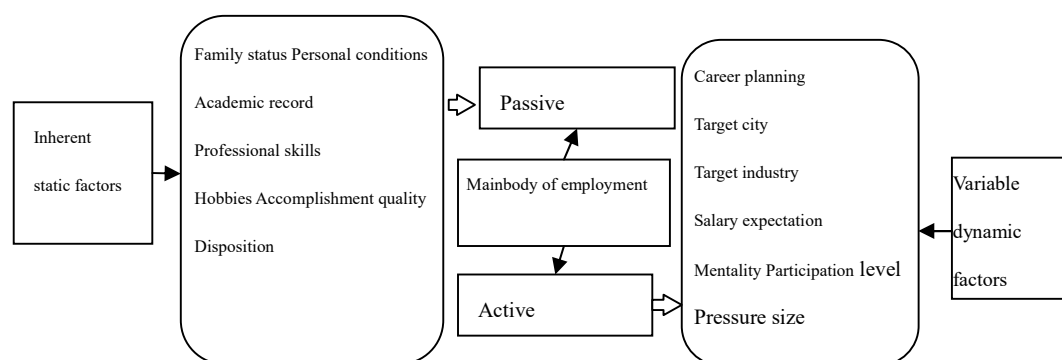


Figure 2. Evaluation System of Employment Competitiveness of College Students

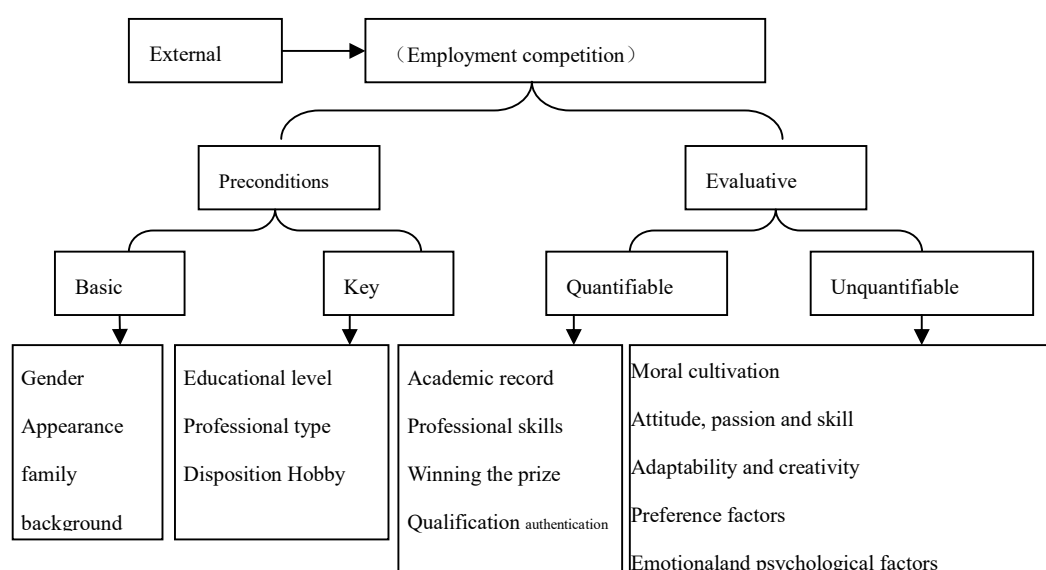


Figure 3. The Level System of Employment Competitiveness of College Students

3. Evaluation of the External Environment for the Employment of College Students in Independent Colleges

Through investigation and research, the research group selected 10 external environment indicators, and conducted questionnaire survey on independent college students and ordinary undergraduate students respectively, and finally used EFE matrix to score, the results are shown in Table 2 and table 3. From the EFE matrix analysis, we can see that: (1) the total weighted score of the external environment of the independent college students' employment is 2.5, reaching the average weighted score level; while the statistical score of the general college students is 2.425, slightly lower than that of the independent college; although there are limitations in the survey data, at least it shows that the independent college students are not weak in the employment environment. Potential; (2) although the level of running an independent college is lower than that of an ordinary college, its response to the external environment is more sensitive, and talent cultivation is flexible in combination with the

changes of social and economic development; at the same time, due to the innate sense of dislocation development, the talent cultivation of an independent college has a natural tendency of practicality and skills, which is more grounded than that of an ordinary undergraduate (especially Jingjiang university is an independent college with engineering characteristics, which naturally has the characteristics of talent cultivation focusing on practicality and skills); (3) in terms of brand recognition, employment tendency, teachers' treatment and teachers' development space, although independent colleges are inherently deficient, due to their conscious measures, they often turn challenges into opportunities, so their scores are not low; (4) the national policies of "transformation from independent college to application-oriented university" and "improvement of vocational education system" provide opportunities for the overall development and long-term development of independent college, while a large number of local ordinary undergraduate colleges and universities fail to make effective response due to long-term swing between "Research-oriented" and "application-oriented" positioning. (5) it is the common weakness of independent colleges and universities that the policy factors affecting employment are not fully grasped and the level of employment guidance needs to be improved.

Table 2. Analysis of the External Environment of Employment of Independent College Student

Influence factor	percentage	score	weighting average	total
brand recognition to college of the society	0.1	2.5	0.25	2.5
The tendency of employers to graduates of different undergraduate levels	0.15	3	0.45	
Social distribution and influence of alumni groups	0.05	2.5	0.125	
Changes in the employment needs of enterprises brought about by social and economic development	0.2	2.5	0.5	
Independent college teacher income	0.05	3	0.15	
Independent college teacher development space	0.05	3.5	0.175	
Higher education development policy	0.1	2.5	0.25	
The overall development trend of independent colleges	0.15	2.5	0.375	
Policy factors affecting college students' job hunting in independent colleges	0.15	1.5	0.225	

Table 3. Analysis of the External Environment of Employment for Ordinary Undergraduates

Influence factor	percentage	score	weighting average	total
brand recognition to college of the society	0.1	3	0.3	2.425
The tendency of employers to graduates of different undergraduate levels	0.15	2.5	0.375	
Social distribution and influence of alumni groups	0.05	3	0.15	
Changes in the employment needs of enterprises brought about by social and economic development	0.2	2.5	0.5	
Independent college teacher income	0.05	2.5	0.125	
Independent college teacher development space	0.05	2.5	0.125	
Higher education development policy	0.1	2.5	0.25	
The overall development trend of independent colleges	0.15	2.5	0.375	
Policy factors affecting college students' job hunting in independent colleges	0.15	1.5	0.225	

4. SWOT Analysis of the Employment Competitiveness of Independent College Students

Through the analysis of the connotation system of the employment competitiveness of independent college students, it can be seen that the size of the employment competitiveness is determined by a variety of complex factors, and its effectiveness is also affected by the external environment. At the same time, once the main body of employment enters into the practice of job hunting and has a competitive relationship with other kinds of job seekers, the employment competitiveness becomes a relative concept. Therefore, the employment competitiveness of independent college students can not be discussed with simple quantitative indicators. Instead, it is necessary to comprehensively analyze their advantages and disadvantages of employment competitiveness, correctly understand the opportunities and challenges they face, so as to objectively measure their employment competitiveness. Due to the various levels and types of job seekers, it is neither realistic nor necessary to measure the employment competitiveness of independent college students by comparing with all kinds of job seekers in the society one by one. Based on the level of undergraduate students, this paper selects the most representative competitive group-college students as a sample for comparative study. Taking college students as the comparison object, this paper makes a SWOT analysis on the employment competitiveness of independent college students Table 4. Through the analysis, we can see that: first, as the main body of employment, the advantages and disadvantages of the independent college students

themselves are basically balanced, and the relationship between the two makes them not in a one-sided strong or weak position in the competition; second, from the external environment, the opportunities of the independent college students are relatively less, but the challenges are more, and the employment competitiveness will be greatly reduced; Third, although the internal conditions of independent college students are not dominant, and the external pressure is also large, as long as we take the right response strategies and methods, we can transform the disadvantages, avoid the risks, and maximize the employment competitiveness.

5. Ways to Improve the Employment Competitiveness of Independent College Students

The research on improving the competitiveness of employment in foreign countries is earlier, and has formed a relatively mature system, mainly through the methods of vocational guidance, vocational education, vocational consultation, vocational evaluation, etc., forming the theories of characteristics factor theory, personality career type matching theory, career development theory, decision-making theory, etc. According to the current situation of our country, the research on the promotion of the employment competitiveness of college students shows several characteristics: its focus is gradually changing from “labor market” to “the needs of students’ own development”; the goal of successful employment is changing from the result to the process, that is, the initiative to improve the employment competitiveness is returned to the job seekers themselves; from short-term and static placement to penetration The dynamic career planning of college students has changed from focusing on specialized institutions, full-time personnel, and social organization to closely combining the teaching process, paying attention to the personality characteristics of students, and innovating the talent training mode.

According to the research results at home and abroad, combined with the above SWOT analysis of the employment competitiveness of independent college students, to improve the employment competitiveness of independent college students, we should start from two aspects: the innovation of talent training system and the career planning of college students, and take the progress of their study and life (time dimension) after entering the University as a shift, and take a step-by-step, targeted and various degrees of continuous deepening. Finally, it forms a joint force to promote the development of students’ employment competitiveness. The dynamic ways to improve the employment competitiveness of independent college students, Figure 4.

Table 4. SWOT Analysis of Employment Competitiveness of College Students in Independent Colleges

Analysis on the main factors of employment		Strength	Weakness
Analysis of external environmental factors		1. The family economy is generally better and there are many social relations	1. The school level is not high, the school running time is short, the social influence is not enough, and the diploma is not hard.
		2. The school training mechanism is relatively flexible	2. Low learning and scientific research ability
		3. Active temperament, wide interests and active participation in social activities	3. Weak ability in foreign language and computer level examination
		3. Strong adaptability and creativity	4. Loose behavior habits and strong personality
		5. Good employment mentality	5. Lack of passion for employment
		6. Moderate salary expectation	6. Limitation of employment options
Opportunity			7. Lack of employment skills
		SO strategy	WO strategy
1. There are structural contradictions in post shortage		1. Use flexible training mechanism to train corresponding graduates for structural contradictions.	1. Strengthen the training of practical links and improve practical skills
		2. Grasp the characteristics of students' participation and creativity and improve their application ability	2. Strengthen cultivation education and improve comprehensive quality
2. Enterprises pay more attention to practical application ability and potential than education background.		3. Give full play to the advantages of low employment pressure, good mentality and moderate salary expectation to meet the low cost expectation of enterprises	3. Pay attention to employment education and guidance, and correctly grasp the employment situation
3. Enterprises expect to reduce labor cost			
Threat		ST strategy	WT strategy

1. Recruitment expansion leads to rigid shortage of jobs	1. Give full play to the multiple resources related to the family and open up employment channels	1. Create a good learning style and promote learning ability
2. Under the influence of financial crisis, enterprises reduce personnel	2. Improve the quality of training and implement differentiated competition	2. Strengthen the Employment Evaluation and treat the employment pressure correctly and cautiously
3. There are more graduates with higher education background, more competition in high-end positions, and more enterprises tend to recruit more practical vocational school students in operation positions.	3. Set up a correct view of employment and choose a job first	3. Strengthen employment guidance and improve skills in job selection
4. Enterprises need to improve the quality of candidates	4. Cultivate professional spirit through social practice	

5.1 Flexible Innovation of Talent Training System in Independent Colleges

According to the characteristics of students and the contradiction of structural employment, the independent college should start with the flexible innovation in the initial professional setting and training plan to recruit and train the relevant industries in an “order form”; based on the strengthening of teachers and the optimization of teaching methods, methods and processes, the Independent College should increase and strengthen the practical teaching links through practice, probation, professional practice courses and other forms to improve Students’ practical application ability; make full use of all aspects of social resources to expand the employment of quasi graduates, and build a green employment channel from school to enterprise.

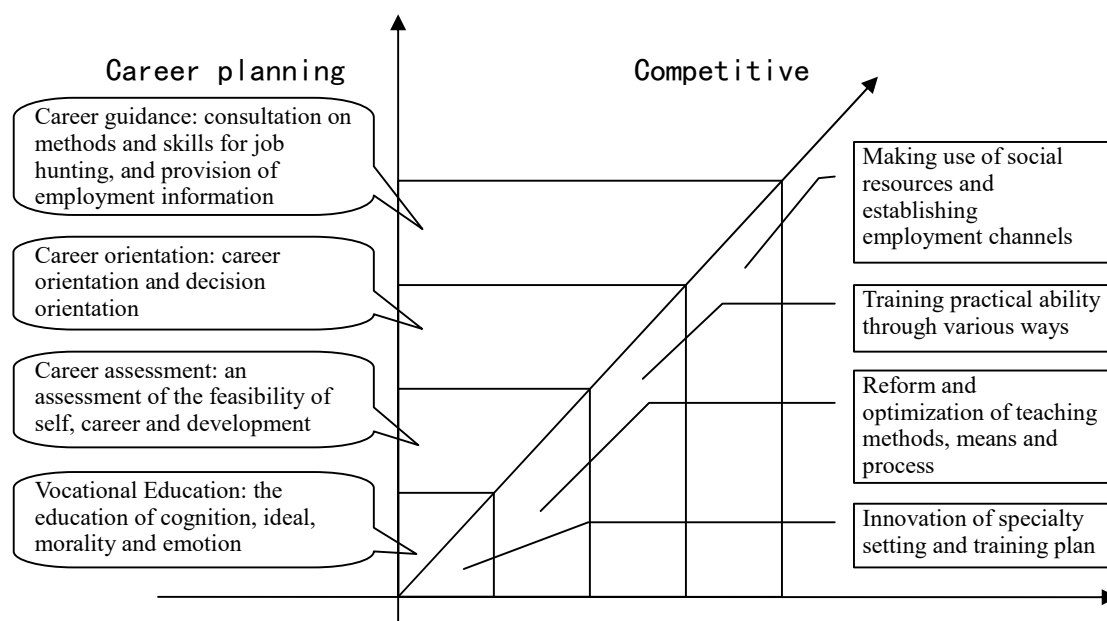


Figure 4. Dynamic Ways to Improve the Employment Competitiveness of Independent College

5.2 We Will Strengthen the Education of Career Planning for College Students in Independent Colleges

First of all, vocational education on Vocational cognition, ideal, morality and emotion should be carried out for the new students, and the employment work should be started from the beginning. Secondly, help students to carry out the feasibility career assessment of self, career and development, “guide students to understand themselves, analyze themselves, help students to find personal core values, understand their own professional character, interest and ability, and make more suitable career plans”. Once again, to promote students to complete career preference selection and decision-making positioning, and establish their own development direction. Finally, we will provide employment information, methods, skills and other consulting and guidance to the graduates, so as to help them enter the workplace smoothly and do a good job of “door-to-door” guidance.

6. Conclusion

As an important part of talent resources in the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, how can independent colleges adapt to the social and economic development situation and the adjustment and upgrading of industrial structure, conform to the trend of transformation and development, train excellent talents reasonably and scientifically, carry out effective career guidance throughout the whole college life, and continuously improve the employment of Independent College Students It is of great practical significance for competitiveness to make it always find its own direction and position in the fierce competition of social employment. It is also of long-term significance to improve the structure of higher education and social talent training in China.

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